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$261K transfer averts payless payday for CHC doctors. PAGE 2
Slaughterhouse seen to open in March. PAGE 3

Power, water rate hike OK'd

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
moneth_deposa@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

» Wastewater rate hike proposal denied
» LEAC reduced, refund OKd

The Commonwealth Public Utilities Commission has approved increases in the Commonwealth Utilities Corp.'s electric base rate and water charges but turned down an increase in the wastewater rate.

Both rate increases will take effect on Feb. 27, 2012.

In its lengthy meeting Friday, lone commissioner Viola Alepuyo also lowered the levelized energy adjustment clause and ordered a LEAC refund after determining that CUC had charged last year a higher LEAC than allowable.

In its order, the commission stated that the electric base rate hike will allow CUC to raise an additional $3.396 million a year.

According to CUC deputy executive director Alan Fletcher, power customers using 250 kWh monthly will see an increase of $1.82 in their monthly bills. Users of 500 kWh per month will see an

See POWER on Page 4

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

A one-day hop to the CNMI was enough to charm U.S. Supreme Court Associate Justice Sonia Sotomayor, who found the CNMI "enchanting and attractive." She vowed to return and promised to urge people from the U.S. mainland to also visit the Commonwealth.

Sotomayor, the first Hispanic justice, arrived on Saipan from Guam Saturday night, making her the first sitting U.S. Supreme Court justice to step foot in the Commonwealth. She was set to return to Guam for her flight back to the U.S. mainland last night, Sunday.

In a press briefing yesterday at the courthouse of the U.S. District Court for the NMI, Sotomayor had nothing but praise for both Saipan and Tinian, which she also visited.

"There's still peace here. It is wonderful to see islands unlike the ones I am accustomed to, even my own island, Puerto Rico, that are very, very developed and don't maintain completely their island identity, but that's not true here," she said.

The justice said she was able to watch and experience the CNMI's native dancing and saw people still living the island life.

"It is really very, very attractive and inviting. I sound like a tourist ad for you, but I've been converted. And I think people should come and visit

See SOTOMAYOR on Page 4

U.S. Supreme Court Associate Justice Sonia Sotomayor (center) listens to a question during yesterday's press conference at the U.S. District Court for the NMI's courthouse. Also in photo from left are U.S. District Court for Guam Chief Judge Frances Tydingco-Gatewood, Superior Court Presiding Judge Robert C. Naraja, U.S. District Court for the NMI Chief Judge Ramona V. Manglona, and U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit Judge Susan P. Graber.
FERDIE DE LA TORRE

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POLL RESULTS

In a week's time, how often do you visit any CNMI government-owned website?

Never	81
Rarely	36
Sometimes	14
Often	5
Always	7

Sunday, January 29, 2012

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LOCAL

The Catholic community in the CNMI cannot expect a new bishop anytime soon. ➤ PAGE 7

WORLD

Prisoners in Kyrgyzstan have sewn their lips together in protest. ➤ PAGE 15

LIFE & STYLE

A 911 recording reveals frantic efforts by friends of Demi Moore to get help for the actress. ➤ PAGE 19

Local

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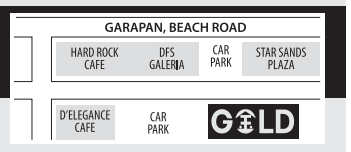

Fitial says $261K transfer averts payless payday for CHC doctors

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
haidee_eugenio@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Gov. Benigno R. Fitial said the transfer of some $261,000 from the Department of Finance to the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. helped avert a payless payday for doctors at the hospital on Friday.

Finance Secretary Larrisa Larson also said Finance made an allotment to CHC that "contributed to their payroll" Friday.

CHC needs some $800,000 to meet biweekly payroll.

The governor said that CHC officials called him up on Thursday, telling him that the corporation cannot pay the doctors on Friday. Fitial said Finance reviewed possible sources of funding that could be used to pay the doctors.

The $261,000 that Finance transferred to CHC is not part of the $5 million seed money allotted by the government to the corporation for fiscal year 2012, but came from reimbursement for Medicare and other services that the hospital had provided.

CHC now gets to keep what it collects for services rendered, instead of remitting it to the central government for appropriation.

"Whenever CHC performs services, they can draw it down from the [federal government]. So those are the drawdowns, totaling $261,000 they asked me to pay the doctors…That was on the pipe already. It's just a matter of transferring that money to the corporation's account because there's money that came in under federal grant accounts and all federal grant accounts are handled by Finance," the governor said in an interview after meeting with 23 lawmakers on Friday at the Saipan World Resort on Friday.

The governor reiterated that the administration, along with the Legislature, continues to seek ways to generate revenue to continue to fund public services and one of those revenue-generating measures is through legalizing casino gaming on Saipan. A House Saipan casino bill is still pending with the Senate, which killed a similar bill in 2010.

One of the new ideas that the governor proposed was to allow existing hotels and golf courses to acquire through fee simple the public lands they are currently leasing from the CNMI government within 180 days after voters approve of such a move.

Sen. Ralph Torres (R-Saipan) said if any such initiative passes and is ratified by voters, it will pave the way for the establishment of commercial property taxes for affected hotels and golf courses. The CNMI currently does not have property taxes.

Rate hike in Telesource contract 'on hold'

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
moneth_deposa@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The cost of Telesource CNMI Inc.'s contract with the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. will not increase following the decision of the Commonwealth Public Utilities Commission to remove this element from the new electric base charge rate that will become effective next month.

Telesource CNMI Inc. is the independent power producer on Tinian. Its wants to be paid at a higher rate. This amendment to its contract—called change order No. 5—was approved last Nov. 29. The commission had approved this change order with the condition that it would take effect upon approval of CUC's emergency petition for an increase in its electric base rate.

CUC deputy executive director Alan Fletcher and chief financial officer Charles Warren told *Saipan Tribune* Friday that the Telesource change order No. 5 was among the three items disregarded by PUC in the new base rate. The other two are the increase in employer contribution to the Fund and reduction in the dividends for the Commonwealth Development Authority.

"The proposed funding of the $1.304 million Telesource revenue requirement will be removed from the electric base rate evaluation and the material condition for commission approval of Telesource change order No. 5 has not been met and the change order remains unapproved," states the CPUC order on Friday.

Change order No. 5 provides extensions of up to 15 years on the Telesource contract, with incremental increases each year that will be sourced from electric base charges. CUC and Georgetown filed an emergency electric base rate factoring in the Telesource change order. On Friday, though, the PUC approved a lower rate increase.

"It [change order No. 5] is on hold…and we will revisit this as soon as we can. But right now, because the rate increase for the Telesource contract is not funded, we have no authority to pay for that, the same with the increased Fund's employer contribution," Fletcher told *Saipan Tribune*.

Prior to CPUC's approval of change order No. 5, the Telesource contract was still good for eight more years or until 2020. CUC paid the company $2 million annually to provide power to Tinian.

Fletcher pointed out that the PUC approval of the change order still stands but the rate increase in the contract will not take effect because it was not factored in the new base rate approved by the commission. He said implementation of change order No. 5 could only take effect when a new electric base petition is approved.

USDA-certified slaughterhouse seen to open in March

» San Nicholas invests in pellet-making machine for hog feed

Former Tinian Mayor Joseph San Nicholas believes that Tinian has the potential to expand its hog production for both local consumption and export.

San Nicholas has joined businessman Tony Pellegrino and several other local investors to build a USDA-certified slaughterhouse. Located in an abandoned garment factory in Lower Base, the facility is expected to be operational by end of March.

Local ranchers are now encouraged to start increasing production to supply hogs for the slaughterhouse, which will be operated by Marianas Meat Harvesting Co.

Commonwealth farmers and ranches have always been limited because the CNMI imports most of its pork, according to Isidro T. Cabrera. "A slaughterhouse will allow our farmers and ranchers to raise more animals for commercial purposes."

The government-owned slaughterhouse in As Perdido ceased operations in 1999 and the Department of Lands and Natural Resources deemed the premises to be abandoned in February 2008. No USDA-certified slaughterhouse exists on any of the islands, including Guam.

According to Cabrera, a slaughterhouse in Lower Base will bring in more revenue for farmers and ranchers since they will now be able to export fresh meat products to neighboring islands such as Guam. "A lot of people prefer fresh meat so the slaughterhouse will really be a good project for local farmers and ranchers, " he said.

San Nicholas sees the cost of feed as the traditional drawback to expanding hog production. "Imported feed is costly because of high freight costs and high price of corn," he said.

To counteract this, San Nicholas has invested in a pellet-making machine on Tinian that can take locally grown agricultural product and make feed pellet for hogs. He plans to sell feed pellets to local ranchers on all the islands to feed hog.

Hogs raised on Tinian can be shipped via the SN5 to Saipan and slaughtered at Marianas Meat Harvesting Co. Ranchers on Saipan can purchase feed pellets to feed their hogs, which will grow faster and heavier. San Nicholas sees economic growth for local farmers and ranchers by integrating feed production and fattening of hogs by local farmers.

Marianas Meat Harvesting Co. will contract to buy hogs at a specific weight delivered to their facility at an agreed date. Hogs are pre-sold to the buyer and are paid upon delivery.

When asked how Marianas Meat Harvest Co. plans to export meat to Guam, Pellegrino said, "Artic Circle Air will handle shipping and distribution to Guam. Our plan is to ship fresh chilled pork product on a daily basis to insure freshness."

San Nicholas feels that the time is now right for large agricultural growth on the islands by combining farming with feed production, slaughter, and delivery to customers.

"I have joined Artic Circle Air as an investor and director and hope to use my experience to jump start the local economy," he said. "We need to find ways to help our local people get jobs and earn money."

He urges CNMI leadership, including the governor, mayors, and Legislature, to encourage and support farming and ranching as a way to help grow the economy. "Our people have been involved in farming and ranching for many generations and now it's time to return to the basics. We have the land and the skills we need to work together," he added. ***(PR)***

Request to release man in sex abuse case to custodian nixed

Superior Court associate judge Joseph N. Camacho has denied the request of Juan R. Babauta to be released to a third-party custodian. The former House candidate is facing charges of sexual abuse of a minor.

During Thursday's bail modification hearing, Camacho found Babauta's proposed third-party custodian to be unsuitable because a minor is staying in the house.

Camacho said the defense counsel can re-file its request to modify bail once a suitable location is found. For now, the bail remains at $25,000 cash.

Assistant attorney general Nicole D. Driscoll had opposed the bail modification, saying Babauta has disregarded Commonwealth laws and the values of the community, standing accused "of vile acts" with a child.

Calling Babauta a predator, Driscoll said the government maintains that releasing him will have a negative impact on the victim and pose a significant threat to society. She said the defendant should not be released to a third party custodian.

"Not only is the victim's safety and well-being at risk if this defendant is released, but other children in the household and the community will also be placed at risk," she pointed out.

Sex crimes, Driscoll said, are on the rise in the Commonwealth and should be deterred.

Police recently arrested the 52-year-old Babauta at his house in As Matuis for alleged sexual abuse of a minor in the second degree.

Assistant public defender Daniel Guidotti serves as counsel for the defendant.

Police reports state that Babauta picked up a 12-year-old girl from a residence on Jan. 6, 2012, at 6pm, and brought her to a house in As Matuis where he allegedly sexually assaulted her.

Saipan Tribune learned that Babauta was GOP's candidate under Precinct 4 for the House during the 2009 election. He lost. ***(Ferdie de la Torre)***

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PATA: Asia-Pacific tourism poised to record 6 percent growth for 2011

BANGKOK, Thailand—Preliminary results released today by the Pacific Asia Travel Association show a collective increase of 6 percent year-on-year for international arrivals into Asia/Pacific destinations during each of the months of October and November 2011. For the first 11 months of the year, South Asia was the star growth performer, followed by Southeast Asia, Northeast Asia, and the Pacific, all of which saw tourism demand improve, albeit at different rates of growth. This momentum is expected to continue for the rest of the year and paves the way for an expected full-year arrivals gain of 5-6 percent in 2011, above the global growth figure of 4 percent. The overall international visitor arrivals count to the wider Asia Pacific region – which includes North America—is expected to reach around 430 million for 2011.

Travel demand to South Asia was particularly strong with growth of 15 percent for the month of October (year-on-year), however, this momentum stalled a little in November when the aggregate gain fell to 9 percent. With the exception of India, all reporting destinations within this sub-region showed outstanding results with double-digit growth during the month of November. A number of destinations in the region set new records for monthly foreign visitor volumes including the Maldives (+22 percent) and Nepal (+17 percent) in October, and Sri Lanka (+26 percent) in November. Growth into the sub-region was supported by a strong performance out of Europe backed up with continued strong expansion out of China and India. Not surprisingly, this sub-region is poised to emerge as the fastest growing in the Asia/Pacific region with a full-year gain expectation of around 11 percent-12 percent for 2011.

ON THE NET

■ www.pata.org/sub-regional-trends-2011/

Southeast Asia recorded a relatively slower close on the year with growth of 7 percent and 3 percent in October and November 2011, respectively. A number of factors were responsible for this result, most particularly the flooding that occurred across many destinations. Thailand, although partially impacted by flooding—and a negative perception of the extent of the flooding—realized a gain of 8 percent and a loss of 18 percent in foreign arrivals during October and November 2011, respectively, compared to the corresponding periods in 2010. This negative effect also continued through December but at a reduced rate. Thanks to sustained travel demand out of China in particular, many reporting destinations managed to show double-digit growth in November ranging from 43 percent for Vietnam, 26 percent for Myanmar, 20 percent for the Philippine,s to 13 percent for Indonesia. Overall, growth in international arrivals to Southeast Asia for calendar year 2011 is expected to be around 11 percent.

Growth in international arrivals into Northeast Asia saw gains of 5 percent in October and 8 percent in November—the strongest monthly growth recorded during the first eleven months of 2011. In particular, this trend reflects the slow recovery of foreign arrivals to Japan, which has been gradually improving from a low of 296,000 in April to 616,000 visitors in October and an expected 551,900 in November. That would bring the reduction in foreign inbound arrivals for Japan to just over 29 percent year-to-date. China reported gains of 1 percent and 3 percent for October and November, respectively, and growth remains strong for other destinations in the sub-region ranging between +9 percent and +20 percent during these latest two months. Intra-regional flows within Northeast Asia coupled with traffic from Southeast Asia continue to play a vital role in generating growth into this sub-region. A full-year growth performance of around 4-5 percent is expected for this sub-region for 2011.

The Pacific posted a 3 percent increase during October 2011 as the lingering impact of the Rugby World Cup helped drive foreign arrivals to New Zealand, which registered close on a 17 percent increase during that month. During November, travel demand growth into Australia (+1 percent) and New Zealand (+2 percent) was back to the average levels seen during the past months of 2011. Most reporting Pacific islands also recorded weak performances in November with only Palau showing double-digit growth. The Pacific had a sluggish year with expected year-on-year growth in arrivals expected to be largely flat for calendar year 2011. ***(PATA)***

Froilan wants casinos to pay retirees, blasts senators for 'obstructionism'

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
haidee_eugenio@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Rep. Froilan Tenorio (Cov-Saipan) blasted Rota and Tinian senators for "obstructing passage" of a House bill seeking to legalize casino gambling on Saipan, even if he said most of the tax money and other revenues collected as a result of the bill becoming law would be used to pay government retirees' pension, restore 40-hour workweek and revive the earned income credit.

Senate Vice President Jude Hofschneider (R-Tinian) told Saipan Tribune that his Senate Committee on Federal Relations and Independent Agencies has yet to meet to discuss House Bill 17-240.

Hofschneider, chair of the Tinian and Aguiguan Legislative Delegation, assured that the committee will thoroughly review the bill.

Tenorio is not a co-author of the casino bill, introduced by Rep. Rafael Demapan (Cov-Saipan) and Rep. Stanley Torres (Ind-Saipan).

Tenorio, whose casino bill was killed by the Senate in 2010, said Rota and Tinian senators are more interested in protecting their casinos from competition that they are in protecting their own retirees.

Tenorio, a former governor and speaker, said senators prefer to raise taxes and take public lands out of the Marianas Public Land Trust.

"I will not let that happen under my watch," he said.

Tenorio called on all retirees and their families on Rota and Tinian, including those overseas, to write to their senators in support of the House casino bill.

"Your own senators are standing in the way of your pensions, which will soon be reduced or eliminated without this bill," he said.

Tenorio pointed out that the casino bill would dedicate 100 percent of the business gross revenue tax from casinos throughout the CNMI to the NMI Retirement Fund until the government's past due obligations to the Fund are fully paid and the government is able to pay its contributions on time.

He said a 1 percent BGRT surcharge on casinos would be used to restore EIC.

Tenorio said a $0 million one-time license for each Saipan casino could be used to end the austerity program and restore regular working hours for government employees.

He said after other revenues are enough to fund the full work week, remaining license funds would become local funds for Saipan.

"I even offered the senators a portion of the Saipan license fees for use on Rota and Tinian, but they would rather see our own people pay, instead of getting the funds from casinos and their foreign patrons," Tenorio added.

SOTOMAYOR

From Page 1

these islands because they are quite enchanting," she said.

Sotomayor said she has been welcomed so warmly and greeted with such hospitality that "I couldn't help but fall in love with each of the islands. And I already did promise I'm coming back, not in a year or two but down the line. I shall return and visit more of your islands."

She said the CNMI is a part of the United States that she didn't know enough about. "And now that I have had a taste, I am anxious and looking forward to learning more."

When asked if there are challenges unique to insular areas that she sees in terms of upholding the rule of law and maintaining the integrity of the judicial system, Sotomayor paused for a moment, then stated that "clearly there is a challenge always when there are mixing of cultural experiences," whether it is for the insular territories or the different parts of the United States.

She cited Alaska and Hawaii, which have struggled with cultural identity issues. There are laws involving the indigenous population in both Hawaii and Alaska that are of constant discussion in those jurisdictions, she added.

Sotomayor said she believes that whenever there is a mix of experiences, there's going to be unique problems and that accepting the rules of another culture is not natural.

"We all like what we are familiar with," she said.

Changing the institutions that families have grown up with, what generations have experienced and superimposing on them a different experience is going to create challenges.

"So obviously language is a challenge. Cultural background is a challenge. Experience is your challenge. How do you integrate that into a new rule of law that itself may be different to your culture," she said.

Sotomayor, however, believes that these challenges are surmountable and something that need to be worked through—make constant adjustments and work together "to ensure that one system is a part of the other in a way that is healthy."

The news briefing lasted only about 15 minutes.

Also present at the conference were U.S. District Court for the NMI Chief Judge Ramona V. Manglona, U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit Judge Susan P. Graber, U.S. District Court for Guam Chief Judge Frances Tydingco-Gatewood, and Superior Court Presiding Judge Robert C. Naraja.

After the briefing, Sotomayor conducted a *conversatorio* at the district court courtroom with members of the NMI Bar, courts' staff, and selected students and members of 2011 Mock Trial competition. Selected students from Tinian and Rota also joined the program through video conference.

Sotomayor earlier joined Bar members at the American Memorial Park for lunch.

She arrived at the Saipan airport Saturday night, accompanied by Tydingco-Gatewood and Interior Assistant Secretary for Insular Affairs Tony Babauta.

Sotomayor and her entourage were greeted by Judge Manglona, CNMI Supreme Court associate justice Alexandro C. Castro, and NMI Bar Association president Sean Frink and other court staff.

Sotomayor was in Guam for the 2012 Annual District Conferences sponsored by the Guam Bar Association and the NMI Bar Association.

Judge Tydingco-Gatewood said that Guam and the CNMI are so blessed and honored that a U.S. Supreme Court justice came all the way from Washington D.C. to spend her time with the people.

"When you meet her you're going to love her. You just can't help but love her," Tydingco-Gatewood said.

Another highlight of Sotomayor's visit in Guam was when she had *conversatorio* with students at the University of Guam.

"It was very successful. The justice was very inspiring to not only attorneys, judges and justices, but all the students of Guam," Tydingco-Gatewood said.

Frink said they are just happy to show Sotomayor the islands and the people. "This is a little beautiful slice of America."

POWER

From Page 1

increase of $2.57.

It was learned that the approved rate increase is lower than the original amount proposed by both CUC and the commission's consultant, Georgetown Consulting.

CUC and Georgetown had recommended the rate adjustment due to four factors: the large decrease in billed usage; substantial increase in retirement contributions this fiscal year from 37 percent to 61 percent; the need to account for Commonwealth Development Authority dividend payments beginning 2012; and the higher cost of the Telesource contract to provide power on Tinian.

The commission eventually disregarded the last three elements in the base rate increase approved on Friday.

For water customers, the rate adjustment will result in a $7.55 increase in the monthly bills of average customers using 10,000 gallons.

According to Fletcher and CUC chief financial officer Charles Warren, this new water rate is also lower than the original amount proposed by CUC. Had the original proposal been approved, for average residential user of 10,000 gallons would have seen their monthly bill increase by $12.32.

Meantime, the commission denied the proposed rate hike for wastewater.

CUC has an estimated 10,000 water customers and about 15,000 wastewater customers.

LEAC reduced, refunds OKd

Alepuyo also ordered a new LEAC rate of $0.30550 per kWh effective Jan. 28 this year.

At present, the LEAC rate is $0.30791 per kWh.

CUC and Georgetown earlier recommended reducing it to $0.30071 as a result of the decline in gas prices. CPUC's order on LEAC reflects a higher reduction that the original petition.

In the same order, CPUC determined that CUC has an over-recovery of $1.986 million from Aug. 1, 2010, through Sept. 30, 2011, and this must be refunded to electric customers over the next 14 months by an adjustment credit of $0.00807.

LEAC is part of the customer's bill that reflects the cost of fuel. The other element of the bill is the electric base rate.

Grave concern

During Friday's deliberation, Alepuyo expressed grave concern over the magnitude of the rate increases proposed by both CUC and Georgetown. She called for a recess in the meeting for the two parties to come up with a revised petition that will reflect lower rate adjustments.

"I have instructed the PUC consultant—Georgetown—to look at various ways in order to make a determination whether any increase can be deferred until such time our people can afford it. Our economy is not getting better, government employees are still working at 64 hours, and the commission is very hesitant to raise any of the rates. But I also understand that CUC must operate and it cannot operate at a loss. So with that balancing act, I have given specific instructions to Georgetown to work CUC in order to come up with something that will give relief to rate payers," said Alepuyo at the beginning of the meeting, just before immediately calling for a recess. A final agreement between CUC and Georgetown was presented to the commission at 2:45pm Friday.

Alepuyo recused herself from discussing the Fund's employer rate contribution, which was among the factors cited by CUC and Georgetown in their rate hike proposals. Alepuyo is counsel for the Fund, which is in dispute with CUC regarding retirement contribution.

Alepuyo approved a total of 19 proposals during Friday's meeting, which is effectively the commission's last meeting as no new commissioner has been appointed yet. Alepuyo, the sole remaining commissioner, will end her term this month. Gov. Benigno R. Fitial has yet to name new commissioners.

Chamber urges Fitial to withdraw, amend new fire fee rates

» Business say Fire Division inspecting, permitting businesses 2 months before proposed rules would have become permanent Jan. 30

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
haidee_eugenio@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Saipan Chamber of Commerce is asking Gov. Benigno R. Fital that the newly adopted fire safety regulations that require $500 for permitting and re-inspection, among other things, be withdrawn and amended "to truly reflect the actual costs associated with necessary, responsible and valuable fire inspections and permitting for all CNMI commercial establishments."

The Chamber also told the governor that the Department of Public Safety's Fire Division has been inspecting, re-inspecting and permitting under the proposed regulations in early December 2011, "before the proposed regulations were printed on Dec. 29, 2011 [in the Commonwealth Register], and almost two months before the proposed regulations would have become permanent on Jan. 30, 2012."

Douglas Brennan, Chamber president, said of greater concern to the Chamber and its smaller member companies are "increased costs associated with required fire code permits, inspections themselves, and any further re-inspections of commercial establishments operating outside compliance with CNMI fire code regulations."

The Chamber president said while the business organization has always believed that fire code inspection and enforcement promotes fire safety, it believes permit and inspection fees proposed to take effect today are "draconian, and above an acceptable range businesses should be charged at any time, let alone during this harsh economic recession."

"SCC is not saying we have a rogue fire chief gone mad, but $500 for permitting every year, $500 for an inspection every year and another $500 for re-inspection at a business establishment is much more than actual costs associated with the CNMI DPS Fire Division conducting inspections and permitting," Brennan told the governor.

Thomas Manglona, chief of the Department of Public Safety's Commonwealth Fire Division, said while they have started inspections and re-inspections, they are "not yet" requesting businesses to pay the fine.

But businesses interviewed said the Fire Division has been implementing fees and fines even before the regulations containing revised rates were to take effect today. They have been asked to pay for fire permit of $500 and re-inspection fee of $500, and are faced with additional fines for not complying with violations found.

The Chamber said the CNMI Fire Division is expected to collect some $4.5 million a year with permitting, inspections, and re-inspections based on Commerce data showing over 3,000 commercial establishments in the CNMI.

Brennan said that figure does not include instances where additional permits would be required for Christmas trees, candles on the premises and other specific fire code allowances assessed additionally for compliance.

"Recent press articles have quoted the CNMI Fire Division as saying costs associated with saving human lives are never too high. We agree, but at $4,500,000 per year in fire code permitting and inspection rates, it begins to appear as the newly adopted fees are arbitrary and capricious at best," he said.

The Chamber also believes all enforcement and inspections are necessary and will prevent fires from occurring, "but more enforcement work should be done in assessing how those fires were started in the first place."

"SCC knows most of those fires were residential, while arson has been identified in some cases. It is erroneous to believe increasing fee costs for permitting and inspections will decrease fire incidents," Brennan told the governor.

He also said businesses cannot continue to endure additional burden affecting the cost of doing business in the CNMI.

"These new fee schedules are just plain too much," he added.

Fund approves hiring of a board consultant for $70K

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
moneth_deposa@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The cash-strapped NMI Retirement Fund will soon have a new board consultant that will be hired to the tune of $70,000 per annum.

The decision, reached during Friday's board meeting, was described by board chair Sixto K. Igisomar as "a pro-active approach" in responding to the numerous immediate needs of the pension agency.

Igisomar could not immediately confirm Friday if the position is newly created but assured that the agency has the funds to pay for it.

He disclosed that he's currently negotiating a contract with a candidate whom he declined to name pending a final agreement. Igisomar said the board consultant will be hired on-island through a sole-source contract.

He refused to disclose the specific criteria or preferences they used in hiring the board consultant.

"I am currently in negotiation…and I will do my best to finalize it by next week," he said during a break in Friday's meeting that lasted past 5pm.

In justifying the new hire, Igisomar undercored the voluminous work currently being handled by Fund administrator Richard Villagomez.

He said the new consultant, besides assisting the board, will also work with Villagomez in fulfilling other tasks, requests, and information that are expected from the pension agency.

Igisomar said the consultant's $70,000 salary will come from the "savings" the agency realized when its investment consultant, actuarial consultant, and money managers terminated their services in October.

The board consultant position has never been placed on the board's formal agenda but Igisomar said the matter has been part of board discussion since last year. He revealed that the recommendation to hire the board consultant was finalized after joint meetings of the personnel and investment committees.

Igisomar said the sole-source hiring is within the bounds of procurement rules.

Earlier this month, the board committees discussed some options on how the agency can reduce its operating expenses and eyed a possible reduction-in-force to cut the agency's expenses this fiscal year.

Both finance and personnel committees had recommended a 20-percent cut in the Fund's personnel cost and all others to reflect its declining revenue.

Saipan Tribune learned that the Fund currently has over 20 personnel that cost the agency some $1.2 million annually. Service fees for its investment consultant, actuarial consultant and money managers amounted to about $2 million last fiscal year.

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The Northern Mariana Islands Retirement Fund (NMIRF) is soliciting proposals to lease approximately 14,666 square feet of prime office space on the second and third floors (approximately 7000 sq.ft. per floor) of the Retirement Fund Building on Capitol Hill, Saipan. Ideally located across from the Governor's Office and the Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature, the building has a backup generator, 24-hour water service, and ample parking space for employees and visitors. Space is available for viewing immediately.
Minimum acceptable terms include the following:
- Per square foot per month, Triple Net (higher for less than full available footage);
- Lessee responsible for own utilities, as well as cost to separately meter;
- 24 months minimum lease term; and
- First month, last month and reasonable security deposit required (amount depends on credit history and financial strength of Lessee).
All proposals are subject to acceptance by the NMIRF Board of Trustees in its sole discretion.
/s/ RICHARD S. VILLAGOMEZ
Administrator, NMI Retirement Fund

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Email: ross@guamcell.net
- Friday February 3rd 8:00am - 5:00pm at Marianas Medical Center in San Antonio
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All interested patients should call Marianas Medical Clinic for scheduling
234-3925/7
Insurance accepted: AETNA and Medicaid
Ross Hearing Aids

Interior said 'sympathetic' to NMI on FICA issue

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
haidee_eugenio@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The CNMI government and businesses have found an ally in the U.S. Department of the Interior, which is "sympathetic" to requests of continued federal tax exemptions for Filipino and Korean workers with Commonwealth-only worker status.

Interior Assistant Secretary for Insular Affairs Tony Babauta said the Interior hopes that the U.S. Department of Treasury will reconsider issues raised in the application of Federal Insurance Contribution Act taxes in the CNMI.

"Hopefully they are listening to the points that we're raising about the application of FICA and how at least at this time it is to the detriment of the economy of the CNMI being able to continue recovering and develop," Babauta told reporters minutes after arriving at the Saipan International Airport to accompany U.S. Supreme Court Associate Justice Sonia Sotomayor.

The Fitial administration and the Saipan Chamber of Commerce are opposed to lifting the exemption from Social Security and Medicare taxes among Filipino and Korean workers with CW status.

The CNMI government recently sued the U.S. Treasury and U.S. Internal Revenue Service to stop the imposition of FICA on these workers. It's yet to known what impact, if any, this lawsuit will have on the ongoing talks between the Interior and U.S. Treasury.

Babauta, in a separate interview, said besides accompanying Sotomayor to the CNMI, he will also follow up on the Forum on Economic and Labor Development grant that Interior awarded to help develop an economic revitalization program and train U.S. citizens.

Babauta said he will meet with the recipients of the FELD grant and see how the CNMI government has been using the grant money, among other things.

This is a one-time grant from OIA's existing technical assistance and other scarce resources.

Fitial, CEC ask court to dismiss Davis' lawsuit

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Gov. Benigno R. Fitial and the Commonwealth Election Commission are asking the district court to dismiss the lawsuit filed by John H. Davis Jr., who seeks to allow U.S. citizens who are not of NMI descent to vote on issues relating to Article 12.

Fitial, the election commission, CEC chair Francis M. Sablan, and CEC executive director Robert A. Guerrero, through assistant attorney general Gilbert J. Birnbrich, asserted that the court must dismiss Davis' lawsuit for failing to plead a cognizable legal theory because Davis does not properly state a constitutional violation.

In a motion to dismiss filed in the U.S. District Court for the NMI on Friday, Birnbrich said civil actions claiming violations of federal statutory or constitutional rights under the color of state or territorial law must be pleaded under 42 U.S.C. Section 1983 because the provisions of the U.S. Constitution and federal laws that confer civil rights do not always provide a private cause of action.

Section 1983 states that "Every person who, under color of any statute, ordinance, regulation, custom, or usage, of any state or territory or the District of Columbia, subjects, or causes to be subjected, any citizen of the United States or other person within the jurisdiction thereof to the deprivation of any rights, privileges, or immunities secured by the Constitution and laws, shall be liable to the party injured in an action at law, suit in equity, or other proper proceeding for redress."

Section 1983, Birnbrich said is necessary because the 14th and 15th Amendments of the U.S. Constitution are not self-executing, and neither amendment creates a private cause of action on its face.

If the court allows Davis to amend his complaint to plead claims through Section 1983, the court nevertheless should dismiss the complaint as to CEC, Birnbrich said.

Section 1983, he said, requires the defendant to be a "person." States and territories, Birnbrich said, are not "persons" for the purposes of Section 1983.

He said CEC is by its very nature an "arm of the Commonwealth," since CEC is an integral part of the Commonwealth's central government, more akin to a state police department than a regional school board. He said CEC is not a governmental corporation.

Birnbrich said while CEC can carry out its duties independent of the central government, its powers and duties are quite limited and what independence CEC enjoys is necessary to keep the election process free from political interference.

The court, he asserted, must accordingly dismiss the claims against CEC with prejudice because CEC is not a "person."

Davis, a vice principal at Marianas High School, wants the court to declare that Article 18 Section 5(c) of the CNMI Constitution violates the 14th and 15th Amendments of the U.S. Constitution and is invalid, null, and void.

Article 18 Section 5(c) states that "in the case of a proposed amendment to Article 12, the word 'voters' shall be limited to eligible voters under Article 7 who are also persons of Northern Marianas descent as described in Article 12 Section 4, and the term 'votes cast' as used in subsection 5(b) shall mean the votes cast by such voters." Article 12 limits landownership in the CNMI only to those of NMI descent. It is up for voters' review this November election.

Davis wants the court to bar the defendants from denying him and other U.S. citizens who are not NMI descent the right to vote.

UOG SCHOLARSHIP UOG

The Palau Women's Club officially awarded their annual University of Guam scholarship on Wednesday, January 25, 2012. Ronalyne Agpaoa, an accounting student in UOG's School of Business and Public Administration, received the $1,000 scholarship to help cover the cost of attending the University of Guam. From left to right: Margie Bautista, treasurer; Teresa Rivera, vice president; Dr. Julie Ulloa-Heath, dean of Enrollment Management and Student Services-UOG; Ronalyne Agpaoa, scholarship recipient; Frances R. Ballendorf, president; Esther C. Espangel, Scholarship Committee chairperson; Keiko Blailes, member; Georgina Oderiong, assistant treasurer. The Palau Women's Club was chartered on Guam in 1978. They award scholarships annually to students attending the University of Guam.

New alternate hearing officer for Atalig case named

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
moneth_deposa@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The NMI Retirement Fund board has appointed attorney Bruce Berline as its alternate hearing officer who will specifically handle the case of retiree Felipe Q. Atalig who wants the board to reverse an earlier decision not to allow him to stay with the defined benefit plan.

According to board chair Sixto K. Igisomar, Berline's selection was reached after the Fund's permanent administrative hearing officer, Maya Kara, recused herself, citing conflict of interest. Edward Manibusan was then appointed to handle the case but he also withdrew due to conflict of interest.

Atalig recently appealed to the board for the immediate appointment of a new hearing officer for the speedy processing of his case.

It was learned that Atalig had appealed to reverse Fund administrator Richard Villagomez's decision not to allow him to remain in the defined benefit plan as he had already terminated his membership with the plan. Atalig believes this decision is improper and unlawful. He is represented in the case by lawyer Ramon K. Quichocho.

Igisomar told *Saipan Tribune* that Berline's payment will not exceed $15,000. This, he said, is the same amount allocated for Kara.

Kara will continue to handle other appeals, new and pending, Igisomar said.

Atalig argues that beginning June 16, 2006 when Public Law 15-13 was enacted, class I members who withdrew their contributions and are subsequently reemployed by the Commonwealth government are enrolled in the defined contribution plan.

Atalig, who was terminated in his previous work at a government agency, was later reinstated. He believes that he did not terminate his government service and should remain in the DB plan.

Anti-cancer group sees a 50-pct. hike in number of clients

By CLARISSA V. DAVID
clarissa_david@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Commonwealth Cancer Association, a community-based nonprofit organization that advocates for a cancer-free Commonwealth and provides support to cancer patients, survivors, and their families, saw a 50-percent increase in their number of clients in 2011.

CCA assistant program manager Naomi DLG Benjamin said that from 44 patients in 2010, the number rose to 66 in 2011. These cancer patients were diagnosed with common forms of cancer such as lung, breast, and cervical cancer.

Benjamin noted that majority of their patients had breast cancer.

"These numbers show that even with an island so small, cancer exists everywhere," Benjamin told *Saipan Tribune*. "And many of the people in the CNMI are affected by this deadly disease."

Benjamin disclosed that CCA gave these patients funds to assist them with buying hospital equipment such as hospital beds, wheelchairs, and oxygen concentrators; nutritional supplements such as Ensure and Glucerna; personal care items; mastectomy bras; and vitamins.

She said CCA was also able to provide support services for cancer survivors and caregivers through monthly Survivor Support meetings. In 2011, a total of 162 participants attended these support meetings.

Benjamin expressed her appreciation to all of CCA's individual, families, and corporate contributors. Last December, the family of the late Gerard Sablan donated $1,500 and a bedside commode. This month, another family who wished to remain anonymous donated a hospital bed, a wheelchair, and a bedside commode.

"CCA was able to provide the support services needed for our cancer patients in the CNMI because of their generous donations and support," she said.

Benjamin added, "That is why in 2012, CCA strives to continue spreading awareness and education about cancer, and the available support resources on island."

To help CCA or for more information, visit their office next to NMPASI along Middle Road, call 682-0050 or email cca@ccamarianas.org.

Injured cargo ship crew evacuated near Saipan

APRA HARBOR, Guam— The U.S. Coast Guard and U.S. Navy evacuated yesterday an injured crewmember from a 570-foot cargo ship near Saipan.

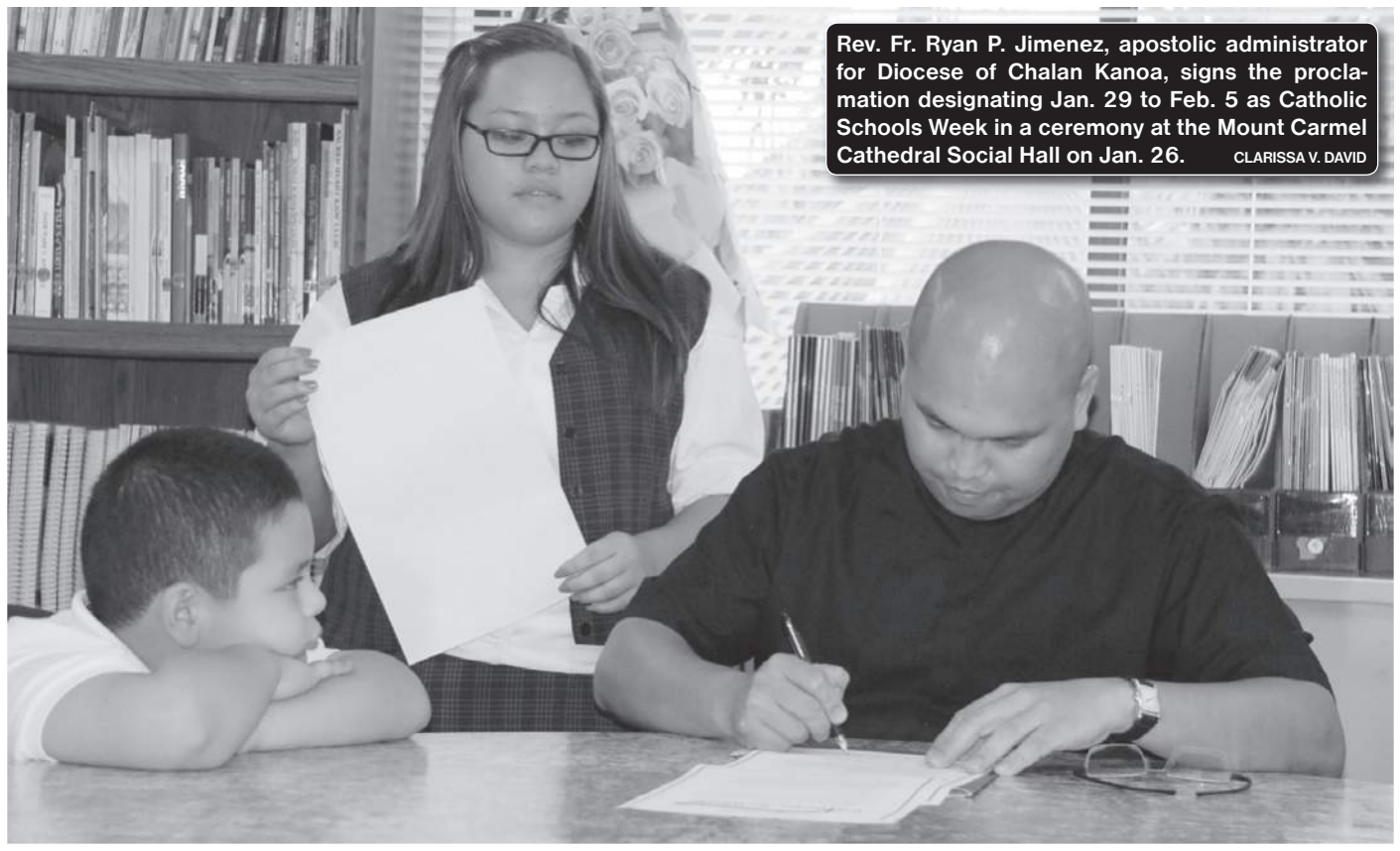
The master of the motor vessel *Sikyon* contacted Coast Guard Sector Guam Saturday requesting a medical evacuation for a 57-year-old crewmember. The crewmember reportedly fell aboard the vessel and two days later began to develop other complications. The vessel was on a voyage to Taiwan from Tacoma, Wash. when the injury occurred. At the time of notification, the *Sikyon* was more than 690 miles from Guam making an immediate evacuation by air difficult.

The *Sikyon* set a course for Saipan where a Navy aircrew from Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron 25, based out of Andersen Air Force Base, waited for the ship to come within range for the evacuation. HSC-25 sent a helicopter to the Saipan International Airport in preparation to launch Sunday afternoon for the evacuation.

"Sector Guam is responsible for a search and rescue area of responsibility roughly the size of the continental United States. Given that, you sometimes have to get creative with your rescue planning," said Lee Putnam, Coast Guard Sector Guam search and rescue controller. "Thankfully, by having the vessel head to Saipan we can reduce the transit time for the helicopter so they have enough fuel to hoist the injured crew member and fly back to Guam." ***(USCG)***

Nearly two years later and still no sign of a new bishop

By CLARISSA V. DAVID
clarissa_david@saipantribune.com
REPORTER



Rev. Fr. Ryan P. Jimenez, apostolic administrator for Diocese of Chalan Kanoa, signs the proclamation designating Jan. 29 to Feb. 5 as Catholic Schools Week in a ceremony at the Mount Carmel Cathedral Social Hall on Jan. 26. CLARISSA V. DAVID

Almost two years have passed since Bishop Tomas A. Camacho of the Diocese of Chalan Kanoa resigned from his post but the Catholic community still cannot expect to have a new church leader anytime soon.

"I was told that it's not going to happen soon. I was expecting that it happens soon because it will be two years in April this year that we don't have a bishop," said Fr. Ryan P. Jimenez in an interview after the proclamation signing of Catholic Schools Week at the Mount Carmel Cathedral's Social Hall on Thursday.

Jimenez said this was the update he received during his trip to Italy before Christmas for the "ad limina visit" every five years—an obligation of residential diocesan bishops and certain prelates to meet with the pope and report on the state of their dioceses and prelatures.

Being the apostolic administrator for the diocese, Jimenez represented the Commonwealth in the visit that was also attended by 16 representatives from the Pacific region, which covers Guam, Caroline Islands, Chuuk, Yap, Palau, Pohnpei, Marshall Islands, Fiji, and American Samoa.

Jimenez took on his new role after Camacho's resignation became official in April 2009. Camacho stepped down as the highest ranking prelate in the CNMI when he turned 75 on Sept. 18, 2008, based on the Canon Law that requires a diocesan bishop who reaches that age to offer his resignation to the Holy Father in Rome.

Jimenez noted, though, that there is no provision in the Roman Catholic Church as to how long a diocese can go without a bishop. "There is only a provision that says an apostolic administrator can maintain status quo while waiting for the process," he added.

Jimenez described the selection of a new bishop as a "long process." In the case of the CNMI, it begins with the apostolic delegate or *nuncio*, the pope's representative based in New Zealand, who does all the "preliminaries" based on his study and consultation with Rome.

"He collates all the materials and at the end of his part, he will send his recommendations—the *terna* or the three names—to Rome. There's an office in the Vatican called *propaganda fidae* that is responsible to go over the names, look at the background. From there, they will be the one to recommend to the Holy Father so the pope is the one [who will select among the three names]," explained Jimenez, adding that there are several names being considered for the position in the CNMI.

Jimenez, who said that the position can be filled by a priest coming from other islands in the Pacific region, emphasized that the process is done "in the spirit of prayer."

"Unlike any other office in the secular world, we believe that this is truly the work of the Holy Spirit," he said.

Jimenez, in his December visit to Italy, asked for a time frame as to when the selection process will conclude since he needed to make decisions and would want to know if he had to wait for the bishop to come in. "But basically I was told, do what you need to do and they won't give a time frame."

According to Jimenez, it's not good for a church not to have a "real leader" so he tries to do what he can while he serves as apostolic administrator.

"It's difficult because you're in charge but really, you're not…It's a challenge not only for us priests and for me as the one in that position [apostolic administrator] but for the people as well," he said.

Jimenez urged the Catholic faithful in the CNMI to "continue to wait patiently."

"I think there must be a reason. God must have a message for all of us. Like anything in life, we're not in control. God is in control."

Jimenez added that when he had an audience with Pope Benedict XVI in December, the Holy Father asked him to tell the community "not to lose hope" and for the priests in the CNMI to continue their pastoral work while waiting for a new bishop.

Jimenez disclosed that all parishes say the prayer for the election of a new bishop every day before Mass, and he urged the community to pray more.

"It's a matter of time. We don't know whether it's months or a year, hopefully not years. But I ask and request if the people can pray more. Continue to pray and hope that soon, there will be a bishop," said Jimenez.

CNMI Water Task Force
IFB12-GOV-035

Governor Benigno R. Fitial and Lt. Governor Eloy S. Inos, through the CNMI Water Task Force, are soliciting Sealed Bids from qualified individuals or firms for the lease of a warehouse on Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

The procurement specifications and special terms and conditions will be available at the Office of the Director, Division of Procurement and Supply, Lower Base, Saipan on or after **January 9, 2012**.

All questions regarding this Invitation for Bids shall be submitted in writing no later than 4:30 PM, **January 20, 2012** to Pedro Sasamoto, WTF Program Manager, at facsimile number (670) 664-2279.

Sealed Bids must be marked **"Lease of Warehouse", IFB12-GOV-035**. An original and four (4) copies of sealed bids must be submitted to the Director of Procurement and Supply, Lower Base, Saipan no later than **2:00 P.M. , local time, on February 7, 2012** at which time Bids will be publicly opened and read aloud at the Division of Procurement and Supply, Lower Base, Saipan. Note that failure to submit the required number of copies may be cause for rejection of a bid.

This procurement is made in accordance with the CNMI Procurement Regulations. Bid procedures shall be in full compliance with Article 3, Part A, Section 3-102 of the Regulations. Preference is not available to local bidders in this procurement because its use is prohibited by the Federal law granting the funds for this project.

This project is funded by a grant from the U.S. Department of the Interior, Office of Insular Affairs. Award of a contract is contingent upon approval from DOI/OIA.

The government reserves the right to reject any and all bids and to waive any imperfection in a bid in the best interest of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. All Bids shall become the property of the CNMI government.

/s/Benigno R. Fitial
Governor

/s/Herman S. Sablan
Director, Procurement & Supply

Invitation for Bids
IFB12-GOV-037

Security Services for Water Task Force Warehouse

Governor Benigno R. Fitial and Lt. Governor Eloy S. Inos, through the Water Task Force, are soliciting sealed Bids for Security Services for the Water Task Force Warehouse on Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

The project Scope of Work will be available at the Office of the Director, Division of Procurement and Supply, Lower Base, Saipan, on or after **January 23, 2012.**

A mandatory Pre-Bid Conference is scheduled for **10:00 a.m.** local time, **February 3, 2012**, at the CNMI Water **Task Force Conference Room, 1316 Anatahan Dr., Capitol Hill, Saipan.**

All questions regarding this IFB must be submitted in writing no later than **4:30 pm, February 2, 2012**, to Mr. Pedro Sasamoto, WTF Program Manager, facsimile number (670) 664-2279.

Bids must be sealed and marked **"IFB12-GOV-037"**. For bidders within the CNMI, one (1) original and four (4) copies of sealed bids must be submitted to the Director of Procurement and Supply, Lower Base, Saipan, no later than **3:00 p.m.** local time, **February 21, 2012**. Bidders located outside of the CNMI may obtain an additional seven (7) working days for receipt of their bid by submitting a Notice of Intent to Bid. Notices of Intent to Bid must be received by the Director of Procurement & Supply no later than **3:00 p.m.** local time, **February 21, 2012**, and may be transmitted via facsimile to (670) 664-1515. For bidders located outside the CNMI, one (1) original and four (4) copies of sealed bids must be postmarked by the U.S. Postal Service or the official government postal service of a foreign country no later than **February 21, 2012**, and must be received no later than **March 1, 2012.** Note that failure to submit the required number of copies may be cause for rejection of a bid.

Bids will be publicly open and read at the Division of Procurement and Supply, Lower Base, Saipan, at 3:00 pm local time, **March 5, 2012.** However, if no Notices of Intent to bid were received from bidders outside the CNMI, bids will be opened at 3:30 pm local time on **February 21, 2012**.

The bid procedures shall be in full compliance with the CNMI Procurement Regulations. Preference is not available to local bidders in this procurement because its use is prohibited by the Federal law granting the funds for this project.

The CNMI reserves the right to reject any or all Bids and to waive any imperfections in any bid if to do so will be in the best interest of the CNMI. All Bids shall become the property of the CNMI government.

/s/Benigno R. Fitial
Governor

/s/Herman S. Sablan
Director, Procurement & Supply

Safety 1st Systems makes work environment safe

CLARISSA V. DAVID

Owned by Manu Melwani and Richard Pierce, Safety 1st Systems CNMI carries a wide range of safety tools and equipment, including first aid kits and supplies, safety shoes, masks, helmets and hard hats, fire extinguishers, automated external defibrillator, flares, vests, and safety signs, among others.

By CLARISSA V. DAVID
clarissa_david@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Working in high-risk or dangerous industries such as construction, mining, and utilities requires very high standards of safety to prevent occupational injuries or worse, fatalities. That's where Safety 1st Systems CNMI, Inc. comes in with products that help you stay safe on the job.

Located along Middle Road next to Sherwin Williams, Safety 1st Systems CNMI, Inc. is owned by Manu Melwani and Richard Pierce and has been the largest retailer and wholesaler of safety products in the CNMI, Guam, and Micronesia for nearly two decades.

The Safety 1st Systems CNMI team is composed of long-time staffers Ketson "Jack" Kabiriel, Nitz Quilantang, and general manager James K. Lee, who officially came on board in May 2011.

Lee holds a degree in Liberal Arts from the Northern Marianas College and an online degree in Marketing from National University. Prior to Safety 1st Systems, Lee worked as the marketing coordinator for a leading telecommunications company on island.

"I decided to do something different," Lee said in an interview when asked why he moved to Safety 1st Systems.

Lee noted that while he is still doing marketing-related responsibilities at Safety 1st Systems, the products are "completely different" from what he was accustomed to promoting.

"The products we have at Safety 1st Systems are what I call a necessity since companies buy them to comply with federal and local laws for safety and protection," he told *Saipan Tribune*.

Safety 1st Systems offers a wide range of safety tools and equipment at reasonable prices. It carries first aid kits and supplies, safety shoes, masks, helmets and hard hats, fire extinguishers, automated external defibrillator, flares, vests, and safety signs, among others.

According to Lee, majority of their clientele are government agencies like the Department of Public Safety and the Commonwealth Utilities Corp., which account for 85 percent of their customers. The remaining 15 percent comes from the private sector and individual walk-ins.

Safety 1st Systems takes pride in supplying the Commonwealth with U.S.-made products, making them compliant and certified by agencies such as the CNMI-OSHA.

Lee pointed out that Safety 1st Systems is also known for establishing and maintaining a relationship with their customers, providing them with the best service they can get. In fact, if the items they need are not in-store, Lee said they accept special orders, going that extra mile by contacting their vendors to make those products available.

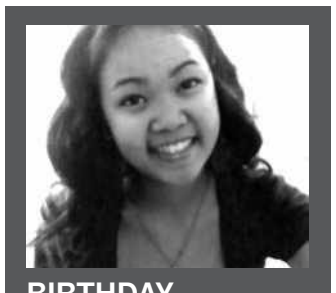
In these trying times, Lee said affordability is a must for them. "We give our best service and keep our prices as low as we can."

Lee disclosed that Safety 1st Systems customers in the CNMI can look forward to more products and styles to suit their needs as well as regular promotions that would make purchasing safety tools and gears easier on the budget.

Put protection and wellbeing on top of your list by turning to Safety 1st Systems CNMI, Inc. for safety products and information vital for your businesses, households or just personal use. Visit the store next to Sherwood Williams along Middle Road. They are open Monday to Friday from 8am to 5pm and Saturday from 8:30am to 12:30pm. Cash and major credit cards are accepted. Businesses can apply for a charge account. For information, call 235-6500 or 7233 or email saipan@safety1st.com.gu.

CLARISSA V. DAVID

Safety 1st Systems CNMI general manager James K. Lee attends to Commonwealth Utilities Corp. trade specialist Patrick Taitano at the store on Wednesday.



BIRTHDAY SHOUTOUT

Happy 17th birthday to Francine Nakazato, who is celebrating her special day today, Jan. 30! May God bless you on this special day of yours! Greetings come from Babe, family, and friends.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Flashback

A LOOK BACK AT PAST YEARS' HEADLINES

Jan. 30,2001

Senate mulls new shooting resort bill

Another legislative measure which aims to allow the establishment of shooting resorts on Rota and Tinian are currently being reviewed by the Senate. Sen. Edward Maratita on Friday introduced the proposed measure to accommodate the construction of multi-million shooting resorts on Rota and Tinian to boost the islands' tourism industry and to generate enough government revenues. Under the new bill, Universal Recreational Shooters will equally divide the $25 million-worth of investment between Rota and Tinian where the proposed shooting resorts will be constructed. But Senate Floor Leader Pete P. Reyes disclosed the proposal is currently being evaluated at the committee level to thresh out problems on earlier legislative measure which requires the shooting resorts to be established within the Free Trade Zone.

OVR consumer programs improve

The Office of Vocational Rehabilitation yesterday expressed high hopes the agency will eventually lose its high risk status following the positive result of the ongoing technical assistance programs to consumers. OVR was removed from the reimbursement status in November 1999 which State Rehabilitation Council Chair Ramon C. Dela Cruz noted as a major progress due to collaborative efforts of various agencies. Mr. Dela Cruz said the remarkable improvements over the past year has impressed the Region 9 Rehabilitation Service Administration after the on-site inspection conducted in February last year

Jan. 30, 2002

Saga of CUC's $51.5M debt continues

Sen. Pete P. Reyes has revived a measure he authored in the 12th Legislature that seeks to transfer the indebtedness of the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. from the Commonwealth Development Authority to the Department of Finance. At the same time, Senate Bill 13-5 seeks to ensure that any repayments made by the CUC to CDA should go to an account called Capital Improvement Projects Local Match Fund, to be used as a source for the matching requirement for CIP funds. Reyes said CUC should be provided with greater flexibility in settling this debt and any repayments it may make for these loans should benefit the Commonwealth and should be used to address the Commonwealth Infrastructure Program needs in the CNMI.

Solar eclipse as MVA come-on

The Marianas Visitors Authority has started sending out flyers and promotional materials to its key offices abroad to lure tourists to visit the Northern Marianas in June this year to witness a rare Annular Solar Eclipse. The Annular Solar Eclipse can be seen from Saipan, Tinian and Rota on June 11 around 8:10am, when the moon's antumbral shadow reaches the southern end of the Northern Mariana Islands chain at 10:10pm on June 10 Universal Time. An annular solar eclipse is different from a total solar eclipse in that the Moon obscures 100 percent of the Sun's disc during a total solar eclipse. At an annular eclipse, a ring (or annulus) of sunlight is left uncovered and this surrounds the dark Moon.

Jan. 30, 2003

User fee totals $7.8M in Q1

User fee payments for the garment industry posted a slight 7 percent increase in the first quarter of Fiscal Year 2003 compared to the same period last year but the figure is still far below the numbers posted in 1999, 2000 and 2001. At the same time, the Saipan Garment Manufacturers Association reports that the volume in dozens of apparel produced still remains approximately 5 percent down from the industry's peak year in 1999. According to SGMA, the drastic drop in sales-and the resulting drop in user fees paid to the CNMI government-is attributed to the nearly 20 percent decline in the sales price the Saipan factories can get in the global marketplace.

BoR: Spare NMC from politics

The Northern Marianas College Board of Regents prefers to oversee the NMC operations independently and free from any form of political pressure, BoR Chairman Vince Seman said. In particular, Seman was referring to the recent calls of Saipan Rep. Stanley Torres for NMC president Kenneth Wright to relinquish his position due to his alleged questionable actions following his entry last August.

Briones couple renew vows after 13 years of togetherness

By CLARISSA V. DAVID
clarissa_david@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Reynaldo and Merly Briones first tied the knot 13 years ago in the Philippines. This year, the couple commemorated their wedding anniversary by renewing their vows at the Saipan Grand Hotel Chapel on Jan. 14.

The couple reaffirmed their commitment and love for one another in an intimate ceremony attended by family and friends who had nothing but best wishes for this doting parents of two children.

A native of Pampanga, Merly looked lovely in her strapless white wedding frock matched with an ornate neck piece while Batangas-born Reynaldo was fine-looking in his dark blue suit. Members of the wedding entourage were equally stunning in their wine-colored dresses.

Rev. Roger A. Abe officiated the ceremony followed by a reception at the hotel's AOI Restaurant.

Opinion

Hafa Adai!
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Jayvee L. Vallejera EDITOR
Mark Rabago ASSOCIATE EDITOR

MEMBER
The Associated Press Pacific Islands News Association

The problem with 'no problem'

By PAULA SIMON
THE BALTIMORE SUN

"No problem!"

Have you noticed that the traditional words "You're welcome" has largely been replaced by that trite phrase?

It bothers me.

It especially bothers me when I'm purchasing a good or service from someone, and the following all-too-familiar conversation takes place:

Vendor: "Here's your receipt, ma'am."

Me: "Thank you."

Vendor: "No problem."

Actually, it is a problem. What I expect is to be thanked for my patronage—not to be dismissed with this casual, automatic response—a response that indicates to me that the person does not get what "you are welcome" means. The phrase implies, "You are welcome to shop here and thanks for allowing us the privilege of serving/helping you." When I hear "no problem," what I think in my head is: "You're right—it's no problem at all for me to patronize another vendor/business next time."

You might be wondering: Why does this phrase bother me so much? Aren't there other, more egregious, offenses of which to take note? Yes, there are—but this one makes me pause because it seems to perpetuate the disdainful way in which people are so often ignored and dismissed; it seems to encourage the subtle message that says, "I've taken care of you, so now hit the road and leave me alone"; it seems to indicate truly that you really are not "welcome," as the saying used to go.

Maybe you're thinking, "Come on now; don't be an Andy Rooney; it's just a popular expression—and no harm is meant by it."

Yes, I'll give you that much. But then that aggravates me even more, because it reinforces the notion that people just aren't listening to or paying attention to one another—which is already a problem at an epidemic level.

People are sitting next to or across from others with whom they're clearly associated but who are choosing to have contact only with the 2-by-4-inch monitor in front of their faces and flying fingers. Try thanking one of these automatons for moving his chair one foot so you too may have a small space at the coffee shop table, and you're likely to be reciprocated with, "No Problem." Trust me, he's not thinking, "You're welcome to join the table." He's thinking, "No problem that you only bothered me a bit."

I've anecdotally studied whether "no problem" is a generational phrase that belongs only to the under-20 set, much like "whatever" (stated most effectively while rolling eyes). And yes, I've found that this phrase is more likely to be spoken offhandedly by younger people—in response to just about any comment made. But the scarier thing to me is that "no problem" seems to be pervasive; it's taken hold in a way that fits no single demographic. There is an outbreak of "no problem" everywhere you go.

So, the next time you're about to utter that dismissive phrase, pause a minute and think about how much more sincere (and polite) it is to say (with some eye contact and a smile): "You're welcome."

Got it?

No problem.

Paula Simon wrote this for the Baltimore Sun. *Her email is paulasimon2003@yahoo.com.*

OMAHA WORLD-HERALD
KOTERBA
INTERNET PIRATES STOLE MY INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY... GOOGLE IS INVADING MY PRIVACY...FACEBOOK CHANGED ITS FORMAT...
I'M GOING TO GO READ A BOOK.

The time for a revolution is now!

Second part of a series

By ANTHONY PELLEGRINO
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Pellegrino is a longtime businessman in the CNMI and is a former president of the Saipan Chamber of Commerce.

Last week we discussed how we arrived at the pitiful state that we are in. Now let's discuss how to create the revolution we need to improve our socioeconomic situation. Our islands contain the biggest assets to help us become stronger economically and a proud people. Any activity we engage in must include jobs and wealth for our people in the private sector, not the public sector of the government. What are the ingredients and assets needed to do so?

Land is one of the most important. We are blessed with four arable islands: Pagan, Saipan, Tinian, and Rota. All of these islands have acres and acres of fertile land waiting to be tilled and give off their bounty.

Good weather is another ingredient that is needed to grow bountiful produce. We are blessed with year-round tropical warm weather allowing a year-round growing season. Rainfall is plentiful to water our produce.

People are needed. Our people are capable of farming and fishing, having performed these two activities as part our culture for centuries. Though we have recently strayed away from these activities, we can easily find our road back to them. There are many young men and women ready to take on these tasks.

Money will be needed to begin the revolution. Believe it or not, it is available. To engage in farming, huge sums of money are not needed. Only basic necessities are required, which are available. Federal grants are plentiful that will help farmers and fishermen learn how to maximize the output of our soil and ocean. Our local government agency the CDA, various banks, and the USDA will loan money to serious farmers.

A market must be available to take our output in great quantity. Guam is only a few minutes away with its huge tourist market of over 1,000,000 annually and a local population of 160,000. Add to that the huge military market waiting to be served. All are waiting for us to help supply their needs.

Many of us forget that the CNMI is very close to billions of potential buyers. Next door, only a few hours away, are China, Japan, and Korea with over a billion and a half people who must eat three times daily! It boggles the mind that we have no confidence that we can participate in these monster markets with their insatiable appetites. Our produce is as good as any grown elsewhere.

We have all the basic ingredients: land, growing season, people, money, and market. But two more ingredients are needed. One is a determination coupled with a strong will and a belief in ourselves that we can successfully mix the ingredients. Secondly, we need a means of transportation for our goods to market.

We have heard of the air cargo bridge that is being built that will join all the islands from Saipan, Tinian, Rota, and Guam and back. It is called Arctic Circle Air. The airline company has been purchased and the first plane has been purchased. In about a month or two the company will begin its services. The market is waiting. Over 40 farmers on the three islands have already promised to begin growing the produce and fruits needed. All the ingredients are there. Now let us mix them properly. Imagine how many more people will be able to enjoy the fruits and produce we will produce to feed them. See how all of these begin to fall into place once we make up our minds to help ourselves.

Until we regain control of our economy, we will never truly prosper. Government employment is no longer the answer. All it does is squeeze from us, the private citizens, to pay its public employees. We need to reduce the number of public sector employees and transfer them to the private sector. Remember Dec. 31, 2014, is fast approaching. The majority of our nonresident workers will be departing. We had better be prepared to fill in.

In addition to returning to the land and the ocean, we must consider another avenue. Let us become shop owners such as grocery stores and barber shops and beauty parlors. Let us open restaurants and serve local produce and fish to our customers. Think how much more money will stay and circulate on the islands. We have jobs waiting but we don't know how to take advantage of them.

Consider a small business requiring little capital except the desire to do so. Many tourist spots have a small cottage industry known as "bed and breakfast," owned and operated by local homeowners. It works this way: tourists coming to Saipan, Tinian, or Rota can choose to live in a private home instead of a hotel. The homeowner with one or two spare bedrooms rents these to tourists who pay for the night and for breakfast. It's that simple. Turn your home into a small inn and earn good money.

Look at the following "bed and breakfast" industry description. The United States Bed and Breakfast (B&B) industry includes about 20,000 establishments with combined revenue of more than $2 billion! No major companies operate in the industry. The B&B industry is highly fragmented. Very few operate more than one establishment. By contacting www.Hoovers.com we can join this organization that will do online reservations for us for any country.

See THE TIME on Next Page

The Spirit of St. Louis

By JAIME VERGARA
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Jaime R. Vergara (jrvergarajr2031@aol.com) previously taught at San Vicente Elementary School on Saipan and is currently a guest lecturer at Shenyang Aerospace University in China.

This was not a football weekend in the continental United States, the kind that glues sports aficionados to their flat screens.

We don our *leis* in Honolulu to *hula* the Pro Bowl that usually precedes the Super Bowl, this year a contest between the New York Giants and the Boston Patriots in Indianapolis, which got an added plug when Indiana Gov. Mitch Daniels delivered the "loyal opposition's" response to President Obama's SOTU 2012.

The Pro Bowl. It's dismissible to real sports fans since it is more of an exhibition in sunny Honolulu, football's glamorous parade of talents for next year's season, or a vacation for tired gladiators who almost made the Super Bowl, or a consolation price for distinguished pigskin players who are seeing the sunset of their game.

Those glued to their TVs Saturday might have noticed something else coming down on the shadows of the big arch south at the confluence of the Mississippi and the Missouri Rivers. A welcome home parade to returning soldiers from the War in Iraq marched to the Spirit of St. Louis. Not unlike the forgotten, ignored, and denied Vietnam vet returnees of a previous generation, this time the Iraq occupiers were welcomed with pomp and circumstance. New York tarried too long to ticker tape as Mayor Bloomberg played occupy-and-seek on Wall Street, though he did meet official objections when he broached the subject for a parade in the Big Apple.

Saturday's parade. Two common but enterprising guys named Craig and Tom got the ball rolling, secured funding support from St. Louis' Anheuser-Busch and Mayflower movers; 100 floats plus 25 performing groups went down the usual city parade route from Market and Broadway, ending at the Union Station where 50 organizations set assistance booths to get post-9/11 era vets segued into the country's labor force. Assimilation and integration of veterans into "normal" society is always a challenge to the Veterans' Administration as the horrors of war get replayed in the terror of negligence and indifference of the home front.

We joined the teachers' network teaching Vietnam in 2005, and support the healing intents of the Wall on the Mall in Washington, D.C. It allows us to take the Defense Department and the Pentagon seriously so our comments on the military, on matters of budget and personnel, strategies and tactics, maneuvers and occupations, are not done willy-nilly. We are in dialogue with the proponents of the Spartan side of law and order from the Athenian side of open port, welcoming culture—open hearts, minds and arms.

The military. "Persons in uniform" is a term used for those in a tightly disciplined command structure. Clarity of the objective of a mission with the willingness of troops to subsume their individual interest to its accomplishment determines the efficiency and efficacy of a group goal. Catching Saddam Hussein and ensuring that there are no weapons of mass destruction was an articulated goal post-9/11. Osama bin Laden's neutralization was added into the bargain. Opportunists also ran off with bundles of Uncle Sam's green, in construction and war materiel! It is done. It is finished.

We worry when soldiers we consider to be under misguided autocratic governance and nursed in cultural roots of rigid communal structures (e.g., China and NoKor) are further encouraged to lose their individuality to a Command. We worry when we see troops become robotic in their assumption of roles. We hope for the reverse when we take our ruggedly individualistic citizens into the military command on the assumption that corporate-ness enhances their individuality. We are still hoping.

Our Marianas vets. About a thousand returned vets reside in the Marianas, I was told. We would be the last to disparage their service. The VFW in the Pacific chose us as their *Teacher of the Year* awardee in 2005. We did not take the recognition lightly. But being a social studies teacher committed to the standards of educated analysis based on verifiable facts, there is need for illuminating conditions and situations in the universal market of "truths."

Dialogue. It is the military culture we exported to many parts of the world, the one we take for granted in dominating many aspects of American life, that we question. We drain the public coffers to support fear-induced military adventures, rely on command structure vets for CEOs, and utilize the metaphors of combat to describe our strategies of achievement and positions of advantage. Military superiority is not a statement of fact but a defensive assertion of an illusion from Cold War mythology. The metaphor of warfare as annihilation of the enemy in combat is devastating; when Armageddon is desired, the doors of dialogue are closed.

The Spirit of St. Louis. So this Saturday's parade was a welcoming gesture to the American image of taming the unfamiliar and alien, birthed by Charles Lindbergh's solo flight in a single engine plane from NYC to Paris in 1927. Ours now is a challenge on how to garnish the American can-do confidence and see it in the corporate embodiment of a welcoming parade to close out the self-inflicted wounds and terrors of post-9/11 fears.

Priniponen mabenden tanu' publiku

Un' propositu ginen i gobietno para u ma-amenda i Attikulu Onse (Article 11) gi konstitusion 'nai para umasede mabenden tanu' publiku guatu gi hotels yan golf resorts siha guine.

Ilelegña i gobietno na dañkulu na salape para u rikohe iya Marianas yangin masede este na ginagauña. Mampos megai dibiña i gobietnamenton iya Marianas: $300 miyon para i programan man-ritirau, $25 miyon na dibi gi mapos na sakan lamayot patte para i medical referral yan tinetpe poduñg kontribusion tax 'nai gi mismu tiempu sige ha' hulu' i obligasioña.

I dichu asuntu gi este na prinipone: Kau enfin guiya este satbasion petmanente gi sumen chafleg na ekonomian iya Marianas para i man-mamamaila' siha na tiempu? Kulan i ma-offrerese katsun temporariu pot para u satbague' i gobietno ginen kantidan dibiña pagu. Haf' ya ta padese mismu problema gi halom 10 esta 20 años na tiempu? Kau u guaguaha' mas tanu' publiku para umabende talu pot diskuidon manehante?

Gi mismu tiempu, estague' na tropa i sumupopotta i Attikulu Dose ni umamot i mangai tanu' praibet patte gi solu direchon niha dumispone propiadat niha.

I asuntu siempre umapresenta gi hechuran inekuñgog publiku deste Luta, Tinian yan Saipan. Mauleg ta huñgog hafa sentimientun linahyan pot este prinipone.

'Nai chafleg kontodu hospitat

Mampos chafleg, tai fondu i kahan iya Marianas na kontodu hospitatta sumen malañgu gi bandan pottanmoneda. Taya fondu para uson setbision hinemlu' gi man-malañgu siha.

Lau hagas mananae' salape kase $27 miyon pesos gi sakan. Mapuge i nuebu na manehante $5 miyon pesos ya masotta para u ensinahyau puede ti matmos.

Hasupag na disision ginen i gobietno lau ti tinilaika asienton obligasioña umasegura na guaha alibiu para i solu na hospitat publiku guine.

I diskuidu 'nai ma-abiba mage didog na tiempon ha'ilas mediu probleman man-ma'gasta sa' todu lumie' na kimasosson i atufgima' iya Marianas lau tinane' man-politikan na'tatah kulan famaguon elementariu gi plasen eskuela.

Didog mampos i taya' salape gi kahan iya Marianas na kanaha' seguru na magpu' i programman man-ritirau gi halom dos años na tiempu. Lau madidibi i programa kase $300 miyon pesus pot hagas maletke obligasion niha i hagas yan presente na administrasion.

Rason na ileleghu na ha fatoigue hit esta i tiempun ha'ilas sa' teug' mampos i taya' salape' para un' manadan obligasion. I sigiente na attikulu i para u fan ma-utot oran empleau gobietnu papa' esta i 56 oras gi kada dies dias.

Menos mas i pottanmonedan (family wallet or purse) familia mientras sige hulu' i apas kandet, presiun nesessidat, yan otru siha obligasion. Megai lokue' u fan ma-amot ni primet guma' familia. Todu pot todu mas maribaha fuetsan fondun familia ginen hagas ha gagana na pagamientu.

Mampos lokue' malahyu i bandan bisnis. Megai humuchum pettan niha. Man-madispacha empleau ginen che'chu' niha dispues man-pinalo'pu' ni taya salape' para nesessidat familia. Yangin u guaha rinibahan empleau gobietnu, amanu mohon 'nai para u fan macho'chu'?

I mañan lamañana un' fatsu na kustumbre ni sumasa'pet hit pagu. Ni unu malagu' umatrebigue' mumasahalom pot no u inestotba tisun chininaña 'sino u doblau kotbataña. Pagu, kontodu kotbatan ñeti ta godde gi agaga'ta para ta fan e'gadu' gi tadoñg na halom tanu'.

Mampos makat i ta pokakate pagu sa' todu atmos banda kantit ya katkuet guinaifen mañglu siempre un' chineneg guatu gi otru banda, ti un' safu. Hoñgeyu' na esta mananayuyot-yu' na lache mohon este na tinige'hu sa bula para u fan mamadese.

■■■

Piniloghu na i hinanau i Naval Administration guine gi 1961 i mas baba na tiempu gi lina'la' tautau-ta. Lau inipos te'ug' i chinatsagan pagu na tiempu. Ni cho'chu' taya', kada tumalag hilu' hau gumupu para i mapagahes i apas kandet. Gigon chumalamlam hau, kahulu i presiun gaselina yan neñkanu'. Gigon un' lagnos pottanmonedamu, ma-utot oramu ni kumanu' hagas pagamientomu. A` Saina!

By JOHN S. DELROSARIO JR.
Special to the Saipan Tribune

John DelRosario Jr. is a former publisher of the Saipan Tribune *and a former secretary of the Department of Public Lands.*

■■■

Mañake un' sutteritu un' latan ham gi Payless. Ha na'na' gi gua'ot hagas kombentun pale ya humalom kumonfisat. Dispues de ha sañgan todus, ninae' as pale un' anaku' na pinitensia. Hum manau si pale' ya ha pega halom gi kusinan niha i ham. Ha birague' i mañake ha espipiha i latan ham lau taigue. Mattu gi otru semana ya ha konfisat ñaihon putg un' sumen bonita na palao'an ni ha soda' gi kanton tasi. Finaisen as pale haye na'aña yan manu 'nai sumasaga. Ilegña i prohimu, "Hmmm! Nañga pale, un' hassu i ham?" Magpu' i nobena!

Letters to the Editor

Do a little research first

I am a little late with this response but it took me a while to stop laughing. I don't think I know this Keith Brooks who insinuated that I should leave my home of over 25 years to return to the U.S. mainland. In his letter he described his upbringing in a Brahmin-style culture, his travel to other countries, his respect for local people, his belief that locals (whoever that might be) have the right to determine their destiny, my apparent disdain for the local community, among other wild and crazy things. What is funny is he got all of this from a lawsuit that he read about in the paper. Amazing!

Well, Mr. Brooks, let me try to educate you about me just a little. I have lived in the Commonwealth for over 25 years. I am hardly a guest of any kind. I have contributed to this community both in words and deeds. I have a child who was born and raised here. This is my home. I have also traveled and lived in the U.S. and other countries. I have also read the CNMI Constitution, the Covenant, and the U.S. Constitution.

There are some other things you apparently aren't aware of. First, the CNMI is not a country. It is a U.S. Commonwealth. In the event you are confused about that just look anywhere and you will see the Stars and Stripes on display. Second, nowhere in the lawsuit is Article 12 mentioned. I simply think that the issues of the indigenous people of the Marianas should not impinge on my rights as an American. Nor does the lawsuit mention forcing anyone to do anything. My feelings about Article 12 are my own, but a hint—my child is a NMD. So, the next time you feel the absolute need to run off at the mouth or, in this case, the pen, perhaps you might do a little research on, well, everything.

John Davis
via email

THE TIME

From Page 10

To learn more, check the Internet by simply putting in "bed and breakfast industry." The information is overwhelming.

Ladies and gentlemen, I am pleading that you join in making our economy grow again by becoming a part of two major ventures. Consider supplying fruits, vegetable, fish and any value-added products we can make to Arctic Circle Air Company. Consider investing in this company with whatever amount you feel you wish to become a part of this wave.

Become a part owner with your shares and join in. Call me at 287-8310 and I will be glad to discuss details. Many of your friends already have. We want this company to be locally owned and operated.

Another venture is the raising of animals, especially pigs for the Marianas Meat Processing Co. Why import pork or beef when we can provide our own? The company also is inviting local investors to become a part of its organization. Call me also for details. Become a part owner.

Shouldn't we be proud to become a part of helping ourselves in some way rather than stand by and whine at how bad the economy is? The government cannot pull us out of this dilemma. It needs us to create marketing activities that will create more tax revenue. The government cannot and does not create wealth; it uses it to feed itself.

What is presented above is only a starter to what we can do to assist ourselves. I apologize for repeating the same theme over and over again, but it is there and we must listen to it and dance to it. I would rather try and fail than say it cannot be done and not do anything because of my fear and narrow channeled mind.

We have the ingredients and assets. Now let's put them to work! Look in the mirror at ourselves and determine to act today. Let's not sit on our buts (excuses). Let the revolution begin. It will be our major awakening. Revolutions begin when one person says: "Basta! We must change!" Let's do it!

Remember to smile through all of this. Our smile will create another smile and another smile until we look up and see the rainbow over our heads with its pot of gold at the end, or should I say, acres of diamonds. Have a great week!

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam Homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

The Weather

5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Partly cloudy with isolated showers. Northeast winds 10 to 20 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers. Northeast winds 10 to 20 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Mostly cloudy with isolated showers.
▲85° ▼74°	▲85° ▼74°	▲85° ▼74°	▲85° ▼74°	▲86° ▼76°

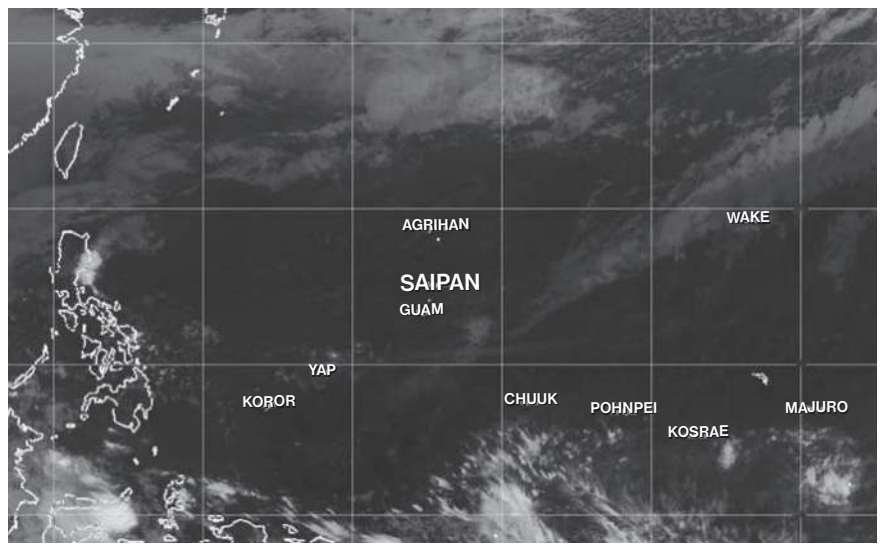
Micronesia

Guam and Rota	Thundershowers	▲84	▼75
Palau	Thunderstorms	▲85	▼77
Yap	Showers	▲86	▼77
Chuuk	Partly Cloudy	▲87	▼80
Pohnpei	Showers	▲86	▼80
Kosrae	Showers	▲86	▼80
Majuro	Showers	▲86	▼80

Around The Globe

Auckland	Mostly Cloudy	▲72	▼64
Beijing	Partly Cloudy	▲37	▼ 7
Hong Kong	Partly Cloudy	▲61	▼55
Honolulu	Partly Cloudy	▲79	▼70
London	Ice	▲41	▼34
Los Angeles	Mostly Cloudy	▲70	▼47
Manila	Partly Cloudy	▲85	▼74
Melbourne	Mostly Cloudy	▲70	▼57
Miami	Partly Cloudy	▲74	▼65
New York	Sunny	▲38	▼28
Osaka	Showers	▲42	▼34
Paris	Cloudy	▲37	▼28
Pusan	Mostly Sunny	▲37	▼23
Rome	Showers	▲57	▼40
Salem	Showers	▲51	▼41
San Francisco	Mostly Cloudy	▲62	▼46
Seoul	Partly Cloudy	▲26	▼12
Tokyo	Partly Cloudy	▲44	▼31
Washington, DC	Sunny	▲42	▼31

Yesterday's Satellite Image



PICTURE TIME: 1:00PM, SUNDAY, JANUARY 29, 2012
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A nearly stationary front extends southwestward from 24N180 to Wake Island at 19N167E to 15N157E then continues as a shear line to end southwest of Guam at 8N143E east of 154E. Cloudiness and scattered showers are found along and up to 350 miles northwest of this boundary west of 154E. Cloudiness and scattered showers are present up to 150 miles northwest of the shear line. Trade-wind convergence is generating scattered showers south of Chuuk and Pohnpei within 125 miles of a line from 1N150E to 4N150E to 4N157E. A trade-wind disturbance is triggering scattered showers over Tarawa and Butaritari atolls within an area bounded by a line from 5N164E to 6N172E to 2N178E to EQ170E back to 5N164E.

Tides

Saipan Harbor

12:03 AM	Today	High Tide:	1.4 Feet
5:51 AM	Today	Low Tide:	0.8 Feet
12:01 PM	Today	High Tide:	1.8 Feet
7:21 PM	Today	Low Tide:	0.5 Feet

Sunrise/Sunset

Today	6:47 AM	6:14 PM
Tuesday	6:46 AM	6:14 PM
Wednesday	6:46 AM	6:15 PM
Thursday	6:46 AM	6:15 PM
Friday	6:46 AM	6:16 PM

Moonrise/Moonset

Today	11:03 AM	11:59 PM
Tuesday	11:44 AM	
Wednesday	12:27 PM	12:48 AM
Thursday	1:13 PM	1:38 AM
Friday	2:02 PM	2:29 AM

Note: Blank spaces indicate that a rising or a setting did not occur during that 24-hour interval.

GET YOUR PICTURES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS PUBLISHED—FOR FREE

The *Saipan Tribune* accepts for FREE publication the following:

PICTURES

- ISLAND SNAPSHOTS
  Birthdays, baptisms, christenings, family gatherings, reunions, club activities, and other community-related events.
- BIRTHDAY GREETINGS
  A way for families and friends to greet their loved ones, accompanied by a picture of the person celebrating his/her birthday.
- BUSINESS
  Corporate donations, volunteer work, promotions, granting of awards, team-building exercises, meetings and other activities by members of the business community.
- SAMU'T SARI
  Pictures from the islands' Filipino community, primarily focusing on Filipino activities, gatherings, get-togethers, volunteer work, etc.
- TRAVELOGUE
  Pictures of off-island travels. Contributors may submit up to 10 pictures for consideration.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- COMMUNITY BRIEFS
  Announcements of upcoming activities of organizations, community clubs, government agencies, and private companies.
- CAMPUS BULLETIN
  Announcements of upcoming activities in public and private schools, as well as calendar of activities. May include PTSA meetings, enrollment procedures.

REQUIREMENTS

For pictures:

- Photos should be original and not copyrighted. Contributors must have the right to allow the *Saipan Tribune* to publish the pictures.
- Digital pictures should be high-resolution (minimum of 800kb).
- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and phone number.
- Photos must have been taken in the last two months.
- For birthday greetings, must be submitted no later than 12 noon of the previous day to make it to next day's edition.

For announcements:

- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and a phone number.
- Must be submitted no later than 12 noon to make it to next day's edition.

HOW TO SUBMIT

- E-mail: editor@saipantribune.com or jayvee_vallejera@saipantribune.com.
- Fax: (670) 235-3740
- Mail: PMB 34, P.O. Box 10001, Saipan, CNMI 96950
- Drop off: 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan
  To check if contributions are received, call (670) 235-6397, 235-2440, 235-8747

POLICY

- The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to accept or reject a contribution for publication; the right to edit all contributions, the date of publication, size of the picture, and page placement; and the right to publish contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats.
- The *Saipan Tribune* will decide how often community announcements are going to be published.
- For Travelogue, the *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to choose which pictures to publish.

NMI CRIME STOPPERS

Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:

- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JANUARY 11, 2012

DEPARTURES

GUAM (GUM)-ROTA (ROP)			
C05062	2:10am	2:40am	1, 5
SAIPAN (SPN)-ROTA (ROP)			
C05064	4:15am	4:50am	1, 5
SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)			
C05064	4:15am	5:45am	1, 5 via ROP
C05070	4:35am	5:25am	2, 3, 4, 6, 7
C05068	8:25am	9:15am	Daily
C05074	12:10pm	1:00pm	1, 4, 5, 7
C05076	3:10pm	4:00pm	1, 2, 4, 5, 7
C05078	6:50pm	7:40pm	1, 2, 4, 5, 7
C05078	7:00pm	7:50pm	3, 6
C05072	9:55pm	10:45pm	1, 2, 4, 5, 7
C05072	10:05pm	10:55pm	3, 6
SAIPAN-NARITA (NRT)			
DL287	6:00am	8:40am	Daily
DL285	6:35am	9:15am	1, 3, 5, 7
DL297	4:25pm	7:15pm	Daily
SAIPAN-OSAKA (KIX)			
OZ119	4:00am	6:40am	Daily
SAIPAN-SEOUL (ICN)			
OZ606	2:10am	6:00am	1
OZ606	2:40am	6:30am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
OZ119	4:00am	11:20am	Daily via KIX
OZ604	3:20pm	7:10pm	Daily
SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)			
OZ608	3:35am	7:05am	4, 7
DL581	4:10am	7:30am	1, 5
SAIPAN-GUANZHOU (CAN)			
3U8646	4:20am	7:30am	2, 6
SAIPAN-SHANGHAI (PVG)			
3U8648	6:10am	8:40am	1, 4, 5, 7
SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)			
OZ606/701	2:10am	11:15am	1 via ICN
OZ606/701	2:40am	11:15am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
C05070/191	4:35am	9:45am	3, 6 via GUM
DL287/173	6:00am	10:25pm	Daily via NRT
C05068/183	8:25am	9:25pm	2, 5 via GUM
C05068/183	8:25am	9:40pm	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
C05076/183	3:10pm	9:25pm	2, 5 via GUM
C05076/183	3:10pm	9:40pm	1, 4, 7 via GUM
C05076/193	3:10pm	11:00pm	2, 5 via GUM-Palau
OZ604/703	3:20pm	11:00pm	Daily via ICN
C05072/PR111	9:55pm	7:50am+1	1, 5, 7 via GUM
C05072/PR111	10:05pm	7:50am+1	3, 6 via GUM
SAIPAN-HONG KONG (HKG)			
OZ606/721	2:10am	12:00pm	1 via ICN
OZ606/721	2:40am	12:00pm	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
C05076/147	3:10pm	10:25pm	1, 5 via GUM
OZ604/723	3:20pm	10:30pm	Daily via ICN
OZ604/749	3:20pm	10:50pm	Daily via ICN

ARRIVALS

ROTA (ROP)-GUAM (GUM)			
C05064	5:15am	5:45am	1, 5
ROTA (ROP)-SAIPAN (SPN)			
C05062	3:10am	3:45am	1, 5
GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN			
C05062	2:10am	3:45am	1, 5 via ROP
C05069	2:45am	3:35am	2, 3, 4, 6, 7
C05071	7:00am	7:50am	Daily
C05073	10:05am	10:55am	1, 2, 4, 5, 7
C05075	1:40pm	2:30pm	1, 4, 5, 7
C05077	5:30pm	6:20pm	1, 2, 4, 5, 7
C05077	5:40pm	6:30pm	3, 6
C05079	8:35pm	9:25pm	1, 2, 4, 5, 7
C05079	8:45pm	9:35pm	3, 6
NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN			
DL298	10:25am	3:00pm	Daily
DL288	8:40pm	1:15am+1	Daily
DL286	7:40pm	12:20am+1	2, 4, 6, 7
OSAKA (KIX)-SAIPAN			
OZ120	9:50pm	2:20am+1	Daily
SEOUL (ICN)-SAIPAN			
OZ603	9:00am	2:20pm	Daily
OZ120	7:10pm	2:20am+1	Daily via KIX
OZ605	7:40pm	1:00am+1	7
OZ605	8:10pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN			
OZ607	9:00pm	2:20am+1	3, 6
DL580	10:10pm	2:55am+1	4, 7
GUANZHOU (CAN)-SAIPAN			
3U8645	7:40pm	3:00am+1	1, 5
SHANGHAI (PVG)-SAIPAN			
3U8647	10:40pm	5:00am+1	3, 4, 6, 7
MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN			
DL172/288	8:00am	1:15am+1	Daily via NRT
C0190/5077	10:55am	6:30pm	3, 6 via GUM
C0190/5079	10:55am	9:35pm	3, 6 via GUM
OZ702/605	12:30pm	1:00am+1	7 via ICN
OZ702/605	12:30pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
PR110/C05071	10:15pm	7:50am+1	1, 3, 5, 6, 7 via GUM
C0192/5071	10:25pm	7:50am+1	2, 5 via GUM-Palau
C0184/5071	11:10pm	7:50am+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
OZ704/603	11:40pm	2:20pm	Daily via ICN
C0184/5071	11:59pm	7:50am+1	2, 5 via GUM
HONG KONG (HKG)-SAIPAN			
OZ724/603	12:30am	2:20pm	Daily via ICN
OZ750/603	1:00am	2:20pm	Daily via ICN
OZ722/605	1:15pm	1:00am+1	7 via ICN
OZ722/605	1:15pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
C0180/5071	11:15pm	7:50am+1	1, 5 via GUM

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); 5K: FlyGuam; 3U: Sichuan Airlines; CZ: China Southern; CO: Continental; DL: Delta Airlines; OZ: Asiana

ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The *Saipan Tribune* is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)

FREEDOM AIR FLIGHT SCHEDULE

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
Guam–Rota			
FRE 100	7:30	8:00	Daily
Rota–Saipan			
FRE 100	8:20	8:50	Daily
Guam–Rota			
FRE 300	17:00	17:30	Daily
Rota–Saipan	17:50	18:20	Daily
Saipan–Rota			
FRE 200	9:30	10:00	Daily
Rota–Guam	10:20	10:45	Daily
Saipan–Rota			
FRE 400	18:55	19:25	Daily
Rota–Guam			
FRE 400	19:40	20:10	Daily
Saipan–Tinian			
FRE 101	6:45	6:55	Daily
FRE 103	7:30	7:40	Daily
FRE 105	8:00	8:10	Daily
FRE 107	8:40	8:50	Daily
FRE 109	9:10	9:20	Daily
FRE 111	10:45	10:55	Daily

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
FRE 115	13:00	13:10	Daily
FRE 117	14:30	14:40	Daily
FRE 119	16:00	16:10	Daily
FRE 121	16:40	16:50	Daily
FRE 123	17:40	17:50	Daily
FRE 125	18:30	18:40	Daily
Tinian–Saipan			
FRE 102	7:05	7:15	Daily
FRE 104	7:50	8:00	Daily
FRE 106	8:20	8:30	Daily
FRE 108	9:00	9:10	Daily
FRE 110	10:00	10:10	Daily
FRE 112	11:05	11:15	Daily
FRE 114	12:00	12:10	Daily
FRE 116	13:30	13:40	Daily
FRE 118	14:50	15:00	Daily
FRE 120	16:20	16:30	Daily
FRE 122	17:00	17:10	Daily
FRE 124	18:05	18:15	Daily
FRE 126	18:50	19:00	Daily

Business

What we worry about when we worry about Greek debt

By MATTHEW CRAFT
AP BUSINESS WRITER

NEW YORK (AP)—Remember Greece?

It's been two years since a financial crisis erupted in the birthplace of drama, and the final act is still unfinished. A second week of talks in Athens ended Friday with no deal between the country, the European Union and private holders of Greek bonds.

Remarkably, even after the crisis became such an international worry last year that the leaders of France and Germany were actually referred to as "Merkozy," the European debt bomb could still explode, with Greece as the fuse.

Economists and investors see a Greek default as the biggest test of the world financial system since the crisis that followed the collapse of Lehman Brothers investment house in 2008.

It is also the biggest threat to what has been a successful start to the year in the U.S. stock market. The Standard & Poor's 500 index has gained 4.7 percent, roughly half its average for a full year, in just four weeks.

"If talks break down next week and it looks like they can't reach a deal, it raises all sorts of risks," says Jeffrey Kleintop, chief market strategist at LPL Financial. "The stock market could probably lose half its gains for the year."

On paper, it's hard to see how Greece could take down financial markets in the U.S., the world's biggest economy, with $15.2 trillion in goods and services churned out every year.

Consider:

■ Greece's economy weighs in at euro220 billion, according to the International Monetary Fund's estimates. That translates to $285 billion, which puts Greece's economy on par with Maryland's. The U.S. sells about $1.6 billion in weapons, medicine and other products to Greece each year, a minuscule 0.07 percent of exports.

■ U.S. banks say Greece on its own poses no danger to them. Unlike European banks, they're not major lenders to Greek businesses and aren't saddled with Greek government debt. In its most recent report, JPMorgan Chase, the largest bank in the U.S., said it had just $4.5 billion at risk in Greece, Ireland and Portugal combined. That's about what the bank makes in revenue in two and a half weeks.

■ Many worry that U.S. banks would struggle to cover the insurance contracts they sold on Greece's euro350 billion, or about $460 billion, in government debt. But the amount of insurance taken out on that debt totals $68 billion, according to the clearinghouse for the contracts. That's hardly enough to pull down the banking system. And the banks have offset all but $3.2 billion of those contracts with other contracts. In other words, pocket change.

"The direct impact of a Greek default is almost zero," Jamie Dimon, CEO of JPMorgan Chase, told CNBC on Thursday.

So what's everybody - well, everybody but Jamie Dimon - worried about?

A breakdown in talks could trigger steep losses in stock markets in Europe and the U.S. Just as in 2008, banks could stop lending to each other, and the credit freeze could cause a market panic.

More importantly overseas, it could cause borrowing rates for Portugal and Italy to jump, pushing those much larger countries closer to defaults of their own.

That's only the beginning. A Greek default could unleash a host of larger problems. Some are already anticipated while others are likely to blindside even the closest observers, says Nick Colas, chief market strategist at ConvergEx Group. "In any complex system, you're going to have unintended consequences," he says.

He compares it to the collapse of Lehman Brothers: Analysts saw it coming, but the fallout in still caught them by surprise. A money market mutual fund found that it couldn't redeem its customers' money. Money market funds, which many considered as safe as savings accounts, suddenly looked suspect until the Federal Reserve backed them up.

At a conference on sovereign debt this week in New York, Steve Hanke, professor of economics at Johns Hopkins University, predicted that even commodity prices would plunge in response to a messy Greek default.

If Greece goes under, traders seeking safety would immediately sell euros and buy dollars, Hanke said. The dollar would soar and prices for commodities like oil and wheat, which are bought and sold in dollars around the world, would collapse. A single dollar would buy much more oil or wheat.

"If the bomb is set off by Greece, commodity prices will collapse," Hanke said.

Hanke, who has advised governments around the world on managing their currencies, argued that Greece appears bound to collapse under its debts as its economy shrinks. "Greece is doomed," he said.

So investors will be watching what happens this week in Athens. At the sovereign debt conference, Hans Humes, president of Greylock Capital Management, said this week could bring "the precedent-setting moment." He warned that if the banks and investment funds that hold Greek bonds take steep losses, then Portugal, Italy and other countries shouldering heavy debt burdens can be expected to follow Greece's lead.

It's comparable to a messy default. Traders will respond by immediately selling government bonds from those countries, Humes said. Borrowing costs will rise, and Europe's debt crisis will turn much worse.

Humes has been involved in the negotiations on the side of creditors holding Greek bonds so he has a stake in the game. But it's a scenario other money managers often cite.

"There's a fear that other countries won't negotiate at all. They'll just say, `We'll pay you back at 50 percent or maybe less," Kleintop says.

AP

Charles Dallara, left and Jean Lemiere from the Institute of International Finance leave Maximos Mansion after meeting Greek Prime Minister Lucas Papademos and Greek Finance Minister Evangelos Venizelos in Athens on Saturday Jan. 28 2012. Talks between Greece and private creditors on halving the country's privately held debt load have ended and a deal is very close, according to the creditors' representatives.

Sabbaticals: Adventuring abroad to spur creativity at work

By CHERYL HALL
THE DALLAS MORNING NEWS

DALLAS—What would you do if you had extra time off and a wad of cash to accomplish something on your bucket list?

That's the opportunity Ray Clark is offering longtime employees at The Marketing Arm.

Anyone who has been with the Dallas-based marketing and promotions agency for at least seven years is being rewarded with seven days off and $2,500. Those who have made it to Year 15 or beyond get a 15-day bonus and $5,000 to do something they've longed to do but didn't have the time or money for.

"This is something I came up with, but it got wildly embraced," says Clark, who announced the unexpected perk to start off 2012 with a bang. "This has created quite a buzz."

Days off have to be taken in one chunk, so when weekends are attached, employees get 11 or 21 days to do something personally rewarding.

A four-person review committee of their peers will give the proposals thumbs up or down or ask for modification. But everyone gets one and has two years to complete it.

Staffers are being asked to:

■ Do something that betters their lives or the life of someone else.

■ Learn something they've always wanted to learn.

■ Investigate or pursue something they're passionate about.

Clark, 47, got the notion a few years ago after giving himself a month off to write a couple of movie scripts. The Marketing Arm chief executive figured he'd be a dandy screenwriter, but he'd always been too busy running the agency he founded in 1993.

He wrote one script and started another. The one he finished, a raunchy comedy aimed at young guys, was actually purchased and produced.

It bombed.

"I found out I really wasn't good at it," he said. "It was humbling, but I was glad I did it."

Clark wanted to give his full-time employees—225 in Dallas and another 225 around the world—a chance to expand their horizons.

This year, 50 staffers qualify. The program is a reward for people who reach their seven-year and 15-year anniversaries.

Since it's new, those who have already passed those milestones get a sabbatical, too. They have two years to take it.

Next year, 25 will qualify for either the seven-year or 15-year bounty. The program will cost between $125,000 and $200,000, depending on how many take advantage of the deal each year.

Clark considers the cost an investment in innovative thinking—something the agency vitally needs to maintain its 100 clients, including AT&T Inc., Frito-Lay Inc., American Airlines Inc. and GameStop Corp. Sabbaticals also increase loyalty and help recruit talent, he says.

Only 21 of Fortune's 100 best companies to work for have paid-for, formal sabbatical programs, says Chris Anderson, The Marketing Arm's director of communications, who intends to use his sabbatical to shoot a photo essay in Cuba. "Sabbaticals have typically been ivory-tower stuff. I think you'll start to see this change as more employers try to help their staffs achieve balance in their lives."

The agency, which has been part of the gigantic Omnicom since 1999, is doing quite well these days. Revenue and morale have never been higher.

The Marketing Arm is "up more than 30 percent for the last three years during the so-called recession, while the industry average has been flat," said Clark, who isn't allowed to give revenue figures but doesn't contradict published reports of $100 million in fees last year.

Of the 200 agencies under the Omnicom umbrella, The Marketing Arm ranks in the top 10 for its culture and at the top when it comes to having fun.

This is, after all, an agency that loads everyone onto buses and heads to the Ballpark at Arlington to celebrate opening day for the Texas Rangers—ditto for its offices in Los Angeles, New York City and Chicago and their teams.

In addition to time off for the entire week between Christmas and New Year's Day and all major holidays, employees with one year of continuous employment get 10 days of annual vacation. That ramps up to 20 vacation days for those with 10 years. Between Memorial Day and Labor Day, employees can take up to six Friday afternoons off to savor the summer.

Clark didn't bother to get parental permission before announcing the sabbatical program two weeks ago.

"Reading this may be the first that they find out about it," he said. "They are the best parent ever, by the way. But I really don't talk to them very often."

It didn't take long for staffers to come up with plans for their sabbaticals.

Travis Dillon, director of property management, wants to go to surfing camp in Costa Rica.

Stu Hill, senior conceptor (that's someone who creates marketing concepts), wants to travel to India for a meditation retreat.

Michelle Palmer, senior vice president, wants to learn how to paint at an art school in Sedona, Ariz.

Account manager Steve Brantzeg wants to visit Norway, where his family hails from and relatives still live.

He was already planning on going to track his genealogy and visit the old family farm. Now the company is footing his bill.

Alison Delzell, vice president, wants to hone her skills at Nick Bollettieri's Tennis Academy in Florida and then teach her daughter how to play.

Sunny Bandy, an account supervisor, wants to follow her ancestors' footsteps and learn how to make cheese and chocolate in Switzerland.

Ryan Flynn, a 12-year agency veteran whose 4-year-old son needs a heart transplant, wants to either lobby for legislation or put on a fundraising event (possibly a golf tournament) for the Children's Cardiomyopathy Foundation in New Jersey.

Vice President Mary O'Connor wants to enroll in clown school so she can be a hospital clown for kids a couple of times a month.

Clark heard about someone who wants to read to poor children in the Philippines.

"It is admirable," he says, sounding a bit bewildered. "I think I'm pretty nice, but if the company gave me one chance to do anything I wanted, that's probably not what I'm going to do. I'm going to be closer to the guy who wants to surf in Costa Rica."

Nation

St. Louis parade on Iraq War's end draws thousands

AP

Participants in a parade to honor Iraq War veterans make their way along a downtown street Saturday, Jan. 28, 2012, in St. Louis.

ST. LOUIS (AP)—Looking around at the tens of thousands of people waving American flags and cheering, Army Maj. Rich Radford was moved that so many braved a cold January wind Saturday in St. Louis to honor people like him: Iraq War veterans.

The parade, borne out of a simple conversation between two St. Louis friends a month ago, was the nation's first big welcome-home for veterans of the war since the last troops were withdrawn from Iraq in December.

"It's not necessarily overdue, it's just the right thing," said Radford, a 23-year Army veteran who walked in the parade alongside his 8-year-old daughter, Aimee, and 12-year-old son, Warren.

Radford was among about 600 veterans, many dressed in camouflage, who walked along downtown streets lined with rows of people clapping and holding signs with messages including "Welcome Home" and "Thanks to our Service Men and Women." Some of the war-tested troops wiped away tears as they acknowledged the support from a crowd that organizers estimated reached 100,000 people.

Fire trucks with aerial ladders hoisted huge American flags in three different places along the route, with politicians, marching bands—even the Budweiser Clydesdales—joining in. But the large crowd was clearly there to salute men and women in the military, and people cheered wildly as groups of veterans walked by.

That was the hope of organizers Craig Schneider and Tom Appelbaum. Neither man has served in the military but came up with the idea after noticing there had been little fanfare for returning Iraq War veterans aside from gatherings at airports and military bases. No ticker-tape parades or large public celebrations.

Appelbaum, an attorney, and Schneider, a school district technical coordinator, decided something needed to be done. So they sought donations, launched a Facebook page, met with the mayor and mapped a route. The grassroots effort resulted in a huge turnout despite raising only about $35,000 and limited marketing.

That marketing included using a photo of Radford being welcomed home from his second tour in Iraq by his then-6-year-old daughter. The girl had reached up, grabbed his hand and said, "I missed you, daddy." Radford's sister caught the moment with her cellphone camera, and the image graced T-shirts and posters for the parade.

Veterans came from around the country, and more than 100 entries—including marching bands, motorcycle groups and military units—signed up ahead of the event, Appelbaum said.

Schneider said he was amazed how everyone, from city officials to military organizations to the media, embraced the parade.

"It was an idea that nobody said no to," he said. "America was ready for this."

All that effort by her hometown was especially touching for Gayla Gibson, a 38-year-old Air Force master sergeant who said she spent four months in Iraq—seeing "amputations, broken bones, severe burns from IEDs"—as a medical technician in 2003.

"I think it's great when people come out to support those who gave their lives and put their lives on the line for this country," Gibson said.

With 91,000 troops still fighting in Afghanistan, many Iraq veterans could be redeployed—suggesting to some that it's premature to celebrate their homecoming. In New York, for example, Mayor Michael Bloomberg recently said there would be no city parade for Iraq War veterans in the foreseeable future because of objections voiced by military officials.

Gingrich says he's in 'til GOP convention

PORT ST. LUCIE, Fla. (AP)—On the weekend before the pivotal Florida primary, Newt Gingrich vowed Saturday to stay in the race for the Republican presidential nomination until the national convention this summer even if he loses Tuesday's vote. Front-runner Mitt Romney poured on the criticism of his rival in television ads airing across the state.

Gingrich's pledge, followed several hours later by an endorsement from campaign dropout Herman Cain, raised the prospect of an extended struggle inside the party as Republicans work to defeat President Barack Obama in the fall. "You just had two national polls that show me ahead," he said. "Why don't you ask Gov. Romney what he will do if he loses" in Florida.

The former Massachusetts governor countered a few hours later while in Panama City. "I think we are going to win here, I sure hope so," he said.

As the two rivals made their appeals to Hispanic, Jewish and tea party voters, veterans of the armed forces and others, all known indicators pointed to a good day for Romney in the primary.

He and his allies held a 3-1 advantage in money spent on television advertising in the race's final days. Robust early vote and absentee ballot totals followed a pre-primary turnout operation by his campaign. Even the schedules the two men kept underscored the shape of the race—moderate for Romney, heavy for Gingrich.

Campaigning like a front-runner, Romney made few references to Gingrich. Instead, he criticized Obama's plans to cut the size of the armed forces. "He's detached from reality," the former Massachusetts governor said.

150 arrested in daylong Occupy Oakland protests

OAKLAND, Calif. (AP)—Oakland police say they arrested a total of about 150 people Saturday as protesters spent a portion of the day trying to get into a vacant convention center, and later broke into City Hall and tried to occupy a YMCA.

Police spokesman Jeff Thomason says most of the arrests came around 8 p.m. That's when police took about 100 protesters into custody as they marched through the city's downtown, with some entering a YMCA building.

About 20 demonstrators were arrested earlier in the afternoon, after police say they threw rocks, bottles and other objects at officers and tore down fencing.

Police say three officers were injured. Officers used tear gas and "flash" grenades on the protesters after they refused to leave.

Authorities were still tabulating the exact number of arrests late Saturday.

Police Sgt. Christopher Bolton said the arrests came after protesters marched through downtown Oakland a little before 8 p.m. Saturday, with some of them entering a YMCA building.

Meanwhile, about 100 police officers surrounded City Hall while others were swept the inside of the building to see if any protesters broke in.

More help from other police agencies was also on the way, with busloads of Alameda County sheriff's deputies arriving in the downtown area late Saturday.

The nighttime arrests came after 19 people were taken into custody in Occupy Oakland protests hours earlier.

Police used tear gas and "flash" grenades on the group Saturday afternoon after some demonstrators threw rocks and other objects at them. Police said three officers were hurt, but they released no details.

ACROSS THE NATION

3 killed in Sacramento SUV-light rail train crash

SACRAMENTO, Calif. (AP)—The driver of an SUV veered around a crossing arm and ignored flashing warning lights before the vehicle was struck by a light-rail train in Sacramento on Saturday, killing an infant and two adults, authorities said. The other person inside the Nissan Pathfinder, a woman in her 30s, was taken to a local hospital with serious injuries, said Niko King, assistant chief with the Sacramento Fire Department. Six of the roughly 50 passengers on the light rail train suffered minor injuries and were taken to a hospital, he said. King and a spokeswoman for the transit line said video from a camera at the crossing clearly shows the SUV driving around the crossing arm.

Official: Yemen president in US for treatment

NEW YORK (AP)—The embattled president of Yemen arrived Saturday in the United States for medical treatment for burns he suffered during an assassination attempt in June. President Ali Abdullah Saleh arrived at an unspecified location in the United States, according to the country's foreign press office. His journey had taken him from Oman, through London. The one-line Yemeni statement said Saleh was in the U.S. for a "short-term private medical visit." His staff has said he is in the United States to be treated for injuries suffered during the assassination attempt. He was burned over much of his body and had shards of wood embedded into his chest by the explosion that ripped through his palace mosque as he prayed. After months of unrest, Saleh agreed in November to end his 33-year-rule of the Arabian state.

Man rescued after being stuck in NM mud for 3 days

ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. (AP)—A homeless man who was stuck in thick mud near the Rio Grande river in Albuquerque for three days was rescued Saturday after some high school students on a field trip heard him yelling for help, authorities said. However, the man's newfound freedom wasn't going to last. Police said he was wanted on a felony warrant, and they planned to arrest him after he was treated at a local hospital. A group of La Cueva High School students and their biology teacher heard the man yelling Saturday morning from a marshy wetlands area in the Oxbow Open Space Preserve, the Albuquerque Fire Department and police officials said.

Authorities: Man, 2 toddlers found dead in Va home

RICHMOND, Va. (AP) -- Authorities say they are investigating the suspicious deaths of a 40-year-old man and two 3-year-old girls—all related—whose bodies have been found in a home in central Virginia. Hanover County Sheriff's spokesman Chris Whitley told The Associated Press the bodies were found Saturday afternoon after investigators were called to a home in Mechanicsville, near Richmond. The Richmond Times-Dispatch identified the dead as a father and his two twins but Whitley declined to elaborate on their relationship or the cause of death. Sgt. Whitley says authorities are collecting evidence as part of a "death investigation" and seeking to determine the sequence of events that led to the deaths. He says preliminary information indicates there are no suspects at large. He declined to release their names early Sunday.

Asia

Despair, crackdowns breed more violence in Tibet

By CHRISTOPHER BODEEN
ASSOCIATED PRESS

BEIJING (AP)—A young man posts his photo with a leaflet demanding freedom for Tibet and telling Chinese police, come and get me. Protesters rise up to defend him, and demonstrations break out in two other Tibetan areas of western China to support the same cause.

Each time, police respond with bullets.

The three clashes, all in the past week, killed several Tibetans and injured dozens. They mark an escalation of a protest movement that for months expressed itself mainly through scattered individual self-immolations.

It's the result of growing desperation among Tibetans and a harsh crackdown by security forces that scholars and pro-Tibet activists contend only breeds more rage and despair.

That leaves authorities with the stark choice of either cracking down even harder or meeting Tibetan demands for greater freedom and a return of their Buddhist spiritual leader, the Dalai Lama—something Beijing has shown zero willingness to do.

"By not responding constructively when it was faced with peaceful one-person protests, the (Communist) party has created the conditions for violent, large-scale protests," said Robbie Barnett, head of modern Tibetan studies at New York's Columbia University.

This is the region's most violent period since 2008, when deadly rioting in Tibet's capital Lhasa spread to Tibetan areas in adjoining provinces. China responded by flooding the area with troops and closing Tibetan regions entirely to foreigners for about a year. Special permission is still required for non-Chinese visitors to Tibet, and the Himalayan region remains closed off entirely for the weeks surrounding the March 14 anniversary of the riots that left 22 people dead.

Video smuggled out by activists shows paramilitary troops equipped with assault rifles and armored cars making predawn arrests. Huge convoys of heavily armored troops are seen driving along mountain roads and monks accused of sedition being frog-marched to waiting trucks.

For the past year, self-immolations have become a striking form of protest in the region. At least 16 monks, nuns and former clergy set themselves on fire after chanting for Tibetan freedom and the return of the Dalai Lama, who fled to India amid an abortive uprising against Chinese rule in 1959.

China, fiercely critical of the Dalai Lama, says Tibet has been under its rule for centuries, but many Tibetans say the region was functionally independent for most of that time. Anger over cultural and religious restrictions is deepened by a sense that Tibetans have been marginalized economically by an influx of migrants from elsewhere in China.

In a change from the individual protests, several thousand Tibetans marched to government offices Monday in Ganzi prefecture in Sichuan province. Police opened fire into the crowd, killing up to three people, witnesses and activist groups said.

On Tuesday, security forces opened fire on a crowd of protesters in another area of Ganzi, killing two Tibetans and wounding several more, according to the group Free Tibet.

On Thursday in southwestern Sichuan province's Aba prefecture, a youth named Tarpa posted a leaflet saying that self-immolations wouldn't stop until Tibet is free, the London-based International Campaign for Tibet said. He wrote his name on the leaflet and included a photo of himself, saying that Chinese authorities could come and arrest him if they wished, group spokeswoman Kate Saunders said in an email.

Security forces did so about two hours later. Area residents blocked their way, shouting slogans and warning of bigger protests if Tarpa wasn't released, Saunders said. Police then fired into the crowd, killing a a 20-year-old friend of Tarpa's, a student named Urgen, and wounding several others.

AP

Tibetan novice monks from Kirti monastery participate in a candlelight vigil to protest against violence by Chinese police against demonstrators in Tibet, at Dharmsala, India, Tuesday, Jan. 24, 2012. The organisers of the vigil, the Regional Tibetan Youth Congress, claimed that eight demonstrators had been killed in two separate incidents at Drango and Serta, ethnically Tibetan areas in the Chinese province of Sichuan.

ASIAN BRIEFS

Fireworks send Beijing air pollution soaring

BEIJING (AP)—Clouds of smoke from Lunar New Year fireworks sent air pollution in Beijing soaring under a new more sensitive measurement system. Readings of fine particulate matter called PM2.5 were about 100 times worse on the Jan. 22 eve of the holiday than the amount considered good for 24-hour exposure, the city's environmental bureau said. The reading drew wide publicity in the local media on Sunday. Concern has grown over air pollution from automobiles and other sources, prompting the city this month to begin measuring PM2.5—particles less than 2.5 micrometers in size. That's about 1/30th the width of an average human hair. Because of their small size, the particles can lodge deeply in the lungs and are believed to pose the greatest risk to health.

Ex-soldier behind Papua New Guinea mutiny arrested

PORT MORESBY, Papua New Guinea (AP)—A retired colonel who attempted to take over Papua New Guinea's military and ordered the prime minister to step down has been arrested and charged with mutiny. Police spokesman Dominic Kakas said Yaura Sasa was arrested Saturday night in a suburb of Port Moresby, the capital. A court spokesman said Sasa was charged with mutiny and appeared in court Sunday. Sasa led a small group of soldiers in a mutiny Thursday in which the military's top commander was briefly held under house arrest. The mutiny was part of a power struggle in which Prime Minister Peter O'Neill and former Prime Minister Michael Somare claim to be the rightful leader of the South Pacific nation.

Myanmar's Suu Kyi making first campaign tour

DAWEI, Myanmar (AP)—Thousands of supporters in Myanmar's countryside cheered opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi during her first campaign tour for parliament Sunday, highlighting how quickly and dramatically politics is changing in this long-repressed Southeast Asian nation. Throngs of people crowded the airport to greet Suu Kyi in the southern town of Dawei and lined the roads shouting: "Long Live Daw Aung San Suu Kyi!" "Daw" is a title of respect in Myanmar. Many waved bouquets of flowers, and some hoisted babies on their shoulders to glimpse the Nobel Peace laureate, who is revered as Myanmar's icon for democracy. Banners with pictures of Suu Kyi decorated the town.

Kyrgyz prisoners sew lips shut; is mafia to blame?

By LEILA SARALAYEVA
ASSOCIATED PRESS

BISHKEK, Kyrgyzstan (AP)—More than 1,000 prisoners in Kyrgyzstan have sewn their lips together, a grotesque act inmates describe as a protest of their dismal conditions, but which authorities blame on organized criminal gangs who resent attempts to break the power they wield in prisons.

Kyrgyzstan, a poor ex-Soviet nation of 5.3 million, holds around 7,600 inmates in its detention centers. The buildings are notoriously crowded and disease-ridden, and they have not escaped the reach of powerful criminal syndicates who also threaten the stability of the country, which hosts a key U.S. air base.

Over the years, prisoners have staged numerous protests—until Saturday, the vast majority of the prisoners were on a 10-day-long hunger strike. But the sewing of lips has been one of the most unusual and brazen ways to bring attention to the prisoners' plight.

An Associated Press reporter who was allowed to visit a pre-trial detention facility recently saw several prisoners with their lips stitched together, leaving enough space to take in liquids, but not enough to eat food. Some prisoners used strands of coarse fiber or pieces of wire.

A 22-year-old, who gave his name only as Yevgeny, said awkwardly through his constricted lips that he was "suffering for justice."

AP

In this video image of Thursday, Jan. 26, 2012, a prisoner with his lips stitched shut looks up in a prison cell in a pre-trial detention center 1 in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan.

But the facility's director, Mars Zhusupbekov, countered that the protest was a reaction to his own attempts to bring justice.

Zhusupbekov said he was appointed head of the facility in the capital Bishkek last month and soon learned that a group of 23 inmates was allowed to roam the prison freely, extorting money from others.

"Intimidated prisoners would call their relatives and ask them to sell their apartment or car, and then transfer the money to the gang in jail," he said.

So Zhusupbekov said he decided to launch raids on cells in mid-January to stamp out the thugs. About a week later, inmates started to sew their lips together, an act he said was forced on frightened prisoners by the criminal gang in his facility.

Crime experts say prison gangs in former Soviet nations are typically part of a complex hierarchical fraternity that extends across the penitentiary system and is ultimately subservient to criminal leaders beyond jail walls.

Almost 400 prisoners bound their lips at Zhusupbekov's jail, and as many as 800 others are believed to have done the same in other jails in what they say is an act of solidarity. Authorities say it is only the influence of organized crime that could have enabled protests on such a large scale.

Zhusupbekov was sanguine about the lip-sewing, describing it as a similar procedure to piercing, and dismissed complaints about poor prison conditions. "This is not a hotel, this is not a holiday resort, they should serve their time," he said.

Prisoners said the raids were an attempt by Zhusupbekov to brutally assert his authority.

"We were just decorating our cell when they threw in a smoke grenade and then they beat us all," said Ulan Sheraliyev, who is awaiting trial on charges of robbery. "And so we are starving and demanding this not happen again and that the perpetrator be punished."

Since Soviet times, underfunded police and galloping corruption have enabled local mafia groups engaged in narcotics trafficking and other crimes to flourish and authorities say the writ of crime gangs extends deep into the nation's jails.

But State Correctional Service chairman Sheishenbek Bayzakov says the system was rotten from the top down.

"I fired 80 percent of prison directors, because over the past few years, they created corrupt schemes and forged alliances with the criminal world," said Bayzakov, who appointed to the post last year. "They laundered money and instead of buying normal food, they would buy rotten and expired goods and just kept the money for themselves."

Bayzakov said several former penitentiary directors now face prosecution for alleged crimes that include running the prison drug trade.

The protests in Kyrgyzstan's prisons have caused international alarm.

World

Peru: 27 killed in fire at rehabilitation center

By FRANKLIN BRICENO
ASSOCIATED PRESS

AP

The bodies of people who were killed in a fire lie on the ground as firefighters try to revive others after removing them from the Christ is Love center for drug and alcohol addicts in Lima, Peru, Saturday Jan. 28, 2012.

LIMA, Peru (AP)—A fire swept through a two-story private rehabilitation center for addicts in a poor part of Peru's capital Saturday, killing 27 people and critically injuring five as firefighters punched holes through walls to rescue residents locked inside.

The "Christ is Love" center for drug and alcohol addicts was unlicensed and overcrowded and its residents were apparently kept inside "like prisoners," Health Minister Alberto Tejada told The Associated Press.

Authorities said 26 people died at the scene, and prosecutors spokesman Raul Sanchez said Saturday night that one of six men hospitalized in critical condition died later.

Peru's fire chief, Antonio Zavala, said most of the victims died of asphyxiation. All the victims appeared to be male.

The local police chief, Clever Zegarra, said the cause of the 9 a.m. fire was under investigation.

"There has been talk of the burning of an object, of a mattress, but also of a fight that resulted in a fire. All of this is speculation," he told the AP. "I've been here at the scene from morning to evening but for the moment the exact cause of the fire is not known."

One resident of the center on a narrow dead-end street in Lima's teeming San Juan de Lurigancho district said he was eating breakfast on the second floor of the center when he saw flames coming from the first floor, where the blaze apparently began.

Gianfranco Huerta told local RPP news radio station that he leaped from a window to safety.

"The doors were locked; there was no way to get out," he told the station.

AP journalists at scene said all the windows of the building they were able to see were barred. Journalists were not allowed inside as police cordoned off the block. By early afternoon, all the dead had been removed from the center.

Most of the bodies seen by reporters were shirtless, their faces blackened. Many were also shoeless.

"This rehabilitation center wasn't authorized. It was a house that they had taken over ... for patients with addictions and they had the habit of leaving people locked up with no medical supervision," Tejada, the health minister, said.

Authorities said they did not know how many people were inside the center at the time of the fire. They said they were looking for the center's owners and staff, some of whom apparently fled the scene.

The local police chief, Zegarra, identified the owner as Raul Garcia.

Zoila Chea, an aunt of one victim, said families paid Garcia $37 to treat an addicted relative and $15 a week thereafter.

She said that neighbors had constantly complained about the center and that it had been closed twice by authorities.

Chea, 45, said relatives were prohibited from seeing interned patients during the first three months of treatment, which she added consisted mainly of reading the Bible.

Cruise ship fuel removal stalled due to rough seas

By NICOLE WINFIELD and FULVIO PAOLUCCI
ASSOCIATED PRESS

GIGLIO, Italy (AP)—Rough seas off Italy's Tuscan coast forced a delay in the planned Saturday start of the operation to remove a half-million gallons of fuel from the grounded Costa Concordia, and officials said pumping may now not begin until midweek.

Recovery operations continued, however, and on Saturday yielded a 17th body: The woman who wasn't wearing a life jacket was found by divers on the submerged sixth floor deck, civil protection officials said.

The Concordia ran aground on Jan. 13 off the port of the island of Giglio port after the captain deviated from his planned route and gashed the hull of the ship on a reef. Some 4,200 passengers and crew endured a panicked evacuation after the abandon ship alarm didn't sound until the ship had capsized so much that some life boats couldn't be lowered.

Some 16 people remain unaccounted for and are presumed dead.

On Saturday, the body found on the ship's deck on Jan. 28 was identified as Erika Soria Molina, 25, of Peru by Doris Sotomayor, Peru's consul general in Florence.

Sotomayor told The Associated Press that the body was found in a submerged part of the deck. Soria, who was wearing a service uniform, studied tourism in Peru and was born in the Andean city of Cuzco, southeast of Lima.

The removal of the fuel aboard the Concordia is a key concern since the seas around Giglio form part of a protected marine sanctuary and are a favorite destination for scuba divers. So far, no leakage has been detected.

Dutch shipwreck salvage firm Smit has been contracted by the Concordia's owner Costa Crociere SpA, a unit of Miami-based Carnival Corp., to remove the fuel. Smit's divers have made the necessary preparations to begin pumping out fuel from six outer tanks that hold more than half of the 500,000 gallons (1.9 million liters) of heavy fuel oil that are aboard the ship.

The rest of the fuel is contained in inner tanks that are harder to access.

So far, divers have drilled into four of the six outer tanks and fixed valves on them: one on top, one on bottom. Hoses will then be attached to the valves and as the oil—which must be warmed to make it less gooey—is sucked out of the upper hose, sea water is pumped in to fill the vacuum via the lower hose.

Smit spokesman Martijn Schuttevaer told reporters Saturday that the pumping operation may not begin now until midweek since the poor weather is forecast at least through Tuesday. Officials don't want to risk the possibility that a battering of the hoses caused by rough seas might lead to leakage.

On Saturday, the choppy waters partially dislodged Smit's barge that was hitched to the Concordia's hull and had served as a staging platform for the fuel removal operation. Smit brought it back into port, where it will stay until the weather improves, Schuttevaer said.

UN nuclear team arrives in Iran

By ALI AKBAR DAREINI
ASSOCIATED PRESS

TEHRAN, Iran (AP)—A U.N. nuclear team arrived in Tehran early Sunday for a mission expected to focus on Iran's alleged attempt to develop nuclear weapons.

The U.N. nuclear agency delegation includes two senior weapons experts—Jacques Baute of France and Neville Whiting of South Africa—suggesting that Iran may be prepared to address some issues related to the allegations.

The delegation from the International Atomic Energy Agency is led by Deputy Director General Herman Nackaerts, who is in charge of the Iran nuclear file. Also on the team is Rafael Grossi, IAEA chief Yukiya Amano's right-hand man.

In unusually blunt comments ahead of his arrival in Tehran, Nackaerts urged Iran to work with his mission on probing the allegations about Iran's alleged attempts to develop nuclear weapons, reflecting the importance the IAEA is attaching to the issue.

Tehran has refused to discuss the alleged weapons experiments for three years, saying they are based on "fabricated documents" provided by a "few arrogant countries"—a phrase authorities in Iran often use to refer to the United States and its allies.

Ahead of his departure, Nackaerts told reporters at Vienna airport he hopes Iran "will engage with us on all concerns."

"So we're looking forward to the start of a dialogue," he said: "A dialogue that is overdue since very long."

In a sign of the difficulties the team faces and the tensions that surround Iran's disputed nuclear program, a dozen Iranian hardliners carrying photos of slain nuclear expert Mostafa Ahmadi Roshan were waiting at Tehran's Imam Khomeini airport early Sunday to challenge the team upon arrival.

That prompted security officials to whisk the IAEA team away from the tarmac to avoid any confrontation with the hard-liners.

Iran's official IRNA news agency confirmed the team's arrival and said the IAEA experts are likely to visit the underground Fordo uranium enrichment site near the holy city of Qom, 80 miles (130 kilometers) south of the capital, Tehran.

WORLD BRIEFS

Doctors in Peru to remove 'parasitic twin'

LIMA, Peru (AP)—Doctors in Peru have found a "parasitic twin" in the stomach of a 3-year-old boy, and plan to surgically remove the tissue Monday. Dr. Carlos Astocondor of the medical team at Las Mercedes Hospital in the northern port of Chiclayo says the condition occurs in about one of every 500,000 live births. He says the partially formed fetus weighs a pound and a half (700 grams) and is nine inches (25 centimeters) long. Astocondor says the brain, heart, lungs and intestines never developed after the fetus was absorbed by the other fetus inside the mother's womb. He says it has some hair on the cranium, eyes and some bones.

Topless protesters detained at Davos forum

DAVOS, Switzerland (AP)—Three topless Ukrainian protesters were detained Saturday while trying to break into an invitation-only gathering of international CEOs and political leaders to call attention to the needs of the world's poor. Separately, demonstrators from the Occupy movement marched to the edge of the gathering. After a complicated journey to reach the heavily guarded Swiss resort town of Davos, the Ukrainians arrived at the entrance to the complex where the World Economic Forum takes place every year. With temperatures around freezing in the snow-filled town, they took off their tops and tried to climb a fence before being detained. "Crisis! Made in Davos," read one message painted across a protester's torso, while others held banners that said "Poor, because of you" and "Gangsters party in Davos."

Focus

Millions manage aging US parents' care from afar

AP

In this photo taken Dec. 22 2011, Evelyn Volk, right, walks with her mother Maria Koenig, who suffers from dementia, as they leave home for grocery shopping in the Woodland Hills section of Los Angeles. The sun was barely up when Volk, dressed in a bathrobe with toothbrush in hand, tossed a pile of clothes into the washing machine, the first of several loads of the day. She glanced at the wall clock that was deliberately set 10 minutes fast. Time to rustle her two teenage kids out of bed and check on her elderly mother who remained fast asleep. These bookend family responsibilities land Volk squarely in the "sandwich generation", pressed between dual roles of supporting aging parents while rearing children.

By MATT SEDENSKY
ASSOCIATED PRESS

WEST PALM BEACH, Florida (AP)—Kristy Bryner worries her 80-year-old mother might slip and fall when she picks up the newspaper, or that she'll get in an accident when she drives to the grocery store. What if she has a medical emergency and no one's there to help? What if, like her father, her mother slips into a fog of dementia?

Those questions would be hard enough if Bryner's aging parent lived across town in Portland, Oregon, but she is halfway across the country in Ohio. The stress of caregiving seems magnified by each of the more than 2,000 miles (3,218 kilometers) that separate them.

"I feel like I'm being split in half between coasts," said Bryner, 54. "I wish I knew what to do, but I don't."

As lifespans lengthen and the number of seniors rapidly grows, more Americans find themselves in Bryner's position, struggling to care for an ailing loved one from hundreds or thousands of miles away.

The National Institute on Aging estimates around 7 million Americans are long-distance caregivers. Aside from economic factors that often drive people far from their hometowns, shifting demographics could exacerbate the issue: Over the next four decades, the share of people 65 and older is expected to rapidly expand while the number of people under 20 will roughly hold steady. That means there will be a far smaller share of people between 20 and 64, the age group that most often is faced with caregiving.

"You just want to be in two places at once," said Kay Branch, who lives in Alaska, but helps coordinate care for her parents in Lakeland, Fla., about 3,800 miles (6,115 kilometers) away.

There are no easy answers.

Bryner first became a long-distance caregiver when, more than a decade ago, her father began suffering from dementia, which consumed him until he died in 2010. She used to count on help from her brother, who lived close to their parents, but he died of cancer a few years ago. Her mother doesn't want to leave the house she's lived in for so long.

So Bryner talks daily with her mother via Skype, a video telephone service. She's lucky to have a job that's flexible enough that she's able to visit for a couple of weeks every few months. But she fears what may happen when her mother is not as healthy as she is now.

"Someone needs to check on her, someone needs to look out for her," she said. "And the only someone is me, and I don't live there."

Many long-distance caregivers say they insist on daily phone calls or video chats to hear or see how their loved one is doing. Oftentimes, they find another relative or a paid caregiver they can trust who is closer and able to help with some tasks.

Yet there always is the unexpected: Medical emergencies, problems with insurance coverage, urgent financial issues. Problems become far tougher to resolve when you need to hop on a plane or make a daylong drive.

"There are lots of things that you have to do that become these real exercises in futility," said Ed Rose, 49, who lives in Boston but, like his sister, travels frequently to Chicago to help care for his 106-year-old grandmother, Blanche Seelmann.

Rose has rushed to his grandmother's side for hospitalizations, and made unexpected trips to solve bureaucratic issues like retrieving a document from a safe-deposit box in order to open a bank account.

But he said he has also managed to get most of the logistics down to a routine.

> *"Someone needs to check on her, someone needs to look out for her. And the only someone is me, and I don't live there."*

He uses Skype to speak with his grandmother every day and tries to be there whenever she has a doctor's appointment. Aides handle many daily tasks and have access to a credit card for household expenses. They send him receipts so he can monitor spending. He has an apartment near his grandmother to make sure he's comfortable on his frequent visits.

Even for those who live near those they care for, travel for work can frequently make it a long-distance affair. Evelyn Castillo-Bach lives in the same Florida town as her 84-year-old mother, who has Alzheimer's disease. But she is on the road roughly half the year, sometimes for months at a time, both for work with her own Web company and accompanying her husband, a consultant for the United Nations.

Once, she was en route from Kosovo to Denmark when she received a call alerting her that her mother was having kidney failure and appeared as if she would die. She needed to communicate her mother's wishes from afar as her panicked sister tried to search their mother's home for her living will. Castillo-Bach didn't think she could make it in time to see her mother alive once more.

"I won't get to touch my mother again," she thought.

She was wrong. Her mother pulled through. But she says it illustrates what long-distance caregivers so frequently go through.

"This is one of the things that happens when you're thousands of miles away," Castillo-Bach said.

Lynn Feinberg, a caregiving expert at AARP, said the number of long-distance caregivers is likely to grow, particularly as a sagging economy has people taking whatever job they can get, wherever it is. Though caregiving is a major stress on anyone, distance can often magnify it, Feinberg said, and presents particular difficulty when it must be balanced with an inflexible job.

"It's a huge stress," she said. "It can have enormous implications not only for someone's quality of life, but also for someone's job."

It can also carry a huge financial burden. A November 2007 report by the National Alliance for Caregiving and Evercare, a division of United Health Group, found annual expenses incurred by long-distance caregivers averaged about $8,728, far more than caregivers who lived close to their loved one. Some also had to cut back on work hours, take on debt of their own and slash their personal spending.

Even with that in mind, many long-distance caregivers say they don't regret their decision. Rita Morrow, who works in accounting and lives in Kentucky, about a six-hour drive from her 90-year-old mother in Tennessee, does all the juggling too.

"We do what we have to do for our parents," she said. "My mother did all kinds of things for me."

Health & Fitness

Amylin's long-delayed diabetes drug gets FDA nod

WASHINGTON (AP)—Amylin Pharmaceuticals won approval Friday for its long-delayed diabetes drug Bydureon, a next-generation treatment that requires fewer injections than the company's 7-year old diabetes medicine, Byetta.

Bydureon is a once-a-week version of Byetta, which is taken twice a day to control blood sugar. Amylin executives say the new drug's convenient regimen will give it a competitive advantage in the marketplace. However, after multiple delays it enters a crowded market, including one diabetes treatement in the same class that has shown superior results.

The Food and Drug Administration approval comes after two rejections in 2010, when the agency asked Amylin to conduct a new study of the drug's effects on the heart's rhythm. News of the costly delay sent company shares tumbling more than 50 percent and contributed to the eventual breakup of Amylin's long-standing partnership with Eli Lilly and Co. The companies ended their collaboration in November, with Amylin paying $250 million and agreeing to take over full responsibility for both Byetta and Bydureon.

Analysts generally expect Bydureon to generate $940 million in sales annually by 2016, though Deutsche Bank analyst Robyn Karnauskas says the drug must post $1.2 billion annually to turn a profit.

Karnauskas points out in a note to investors that Amylin currently has $2 billion in long-term debt and only $210 million in cash. She says Bydureon's approval should give the San Diego company greater flexibility to refinance its debt.

Bydureon is part of the broader GLP-1 class of drugs, which work by increasing the body's insulin production.

People with type 2 diabetes are unable to properly break down carbohydrates, either because their bodies do not produce enough insulin or because they've become resistant to the hormone, which controls blood sugar levels. These patients are at higher risk for heart attacks, kidney problems, blindness and other serious complications. Diabetics often require multiple drugs with different mechanisms of action to control their blood sugar levels.

Diabetes affects more than 25 million people in the U.S., or roughly 8 percent of the population.

Amylin executives say the convenience of the Bydureon's weekly regimen should give it a competitive advantage, but Amylin reported disappointing results last year for it against Novo Nordisk's Victoza, a daily injection approved in January 2010. On average, Bydureon reduced blood sugar levels in diabetics less than Victoza, which uses a different mechanism of action.

A monthly series of Bydureon injections is expected to cost $323, compared with $291 for the older Byetta.

Bydureon was co-developed with Indianapolis-based Eli Lilly, which also helped co-market Byetta. Both drugs are scheduled to transfer to Amylin by the end of 2013. Alkermes, based in Waltham, Mass., created Bydureon's formulation technology, which gradually releases the drug over the course of a week.

Shares of Amylin Pharmaceuticals Inc. leaped $1.85, or 15.2 percent, to $13.99 after hours; the approval was announced just before the markets closed, and the shares ended regular trading up 20 cents at $12.14.

After hours, shares of Alkermes PLC rose 90 cents, or 4.7 percent, to $20. They had ended regular trading down 18 cents.

Study of freakish mystery illness finds no cause

By MIKE STOBBE
AP MEDICAL WRITER

ATLANTA (AP)—Imagine having the feeling that tiny bugs are crawling on your body, that you have oozing sores and mysterious fibers sprouting from your skin. Sound like a horror movie? Well, at one point several years ago, government doctors were getting up to 20 calls a day from people saying they had such symptoms.

Many of these people were in California and one of that state's U.S. senators, Dianne Feinstein, asked for a scientific study. In 2008, federal health officials began to study people saying they were affected by this freakish condition called Morgellons.

The study cost nearly $600,000. Its long-awaited results, released Wednesday, conclude that Morgellons exists only in the patients' minds.

"We found no infectious cause," said Mark Eberhard, a Centers for Disease Control and Prevention official who was part of the 15-member study team.

The study appears in PLoS One, one of the Public Library of Science journals.

Sufferers of Morgellons (mor-GELL-uns) describe a variety of symptoms, including fatigue, erupting sores, crawling sensations on their skin and—perhaps worst of all—mysterious red, blue or black fibers that sprout from their skin. Some say they've suffered for decades, but the syndrome wasn't named until 2002, when "Morgellons" was chosen from a 1674 medical paper describing similar symptoms.

Afflicted patients have documented their suffering on websites and many have vainly searched for a doctor who believed them. Some doctors believe the condition is a form of delusional parasitosis, a psychosis in which people believe they are infected with parasites.

Last May, Mayo Clinic researchers published a study of 108 Morgellons patients and found none of them suffered from any unusual physical ailment. The study concluded that the sores on many of them were caused by their own scratching and picking at their skin.

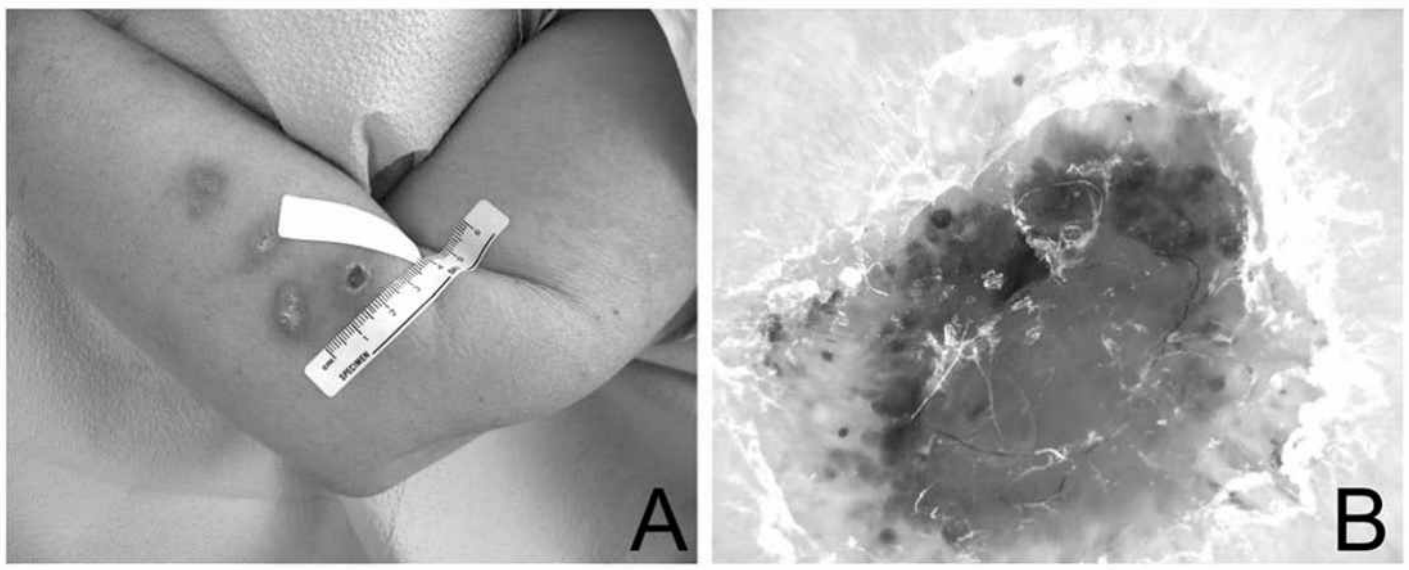
The CDC study was meant to be broader, starting with a large population and then went looking for cases within the group. The intent was to give scientists a better idea of how common Morgellons actually is.

They focused on more than 3 million people who lived in 13 counties in Northern California, a location chosen in part because all had health insurance through Kaiser Permanente of Northern California, which had a research arm that could assist in the project. Also, many of the anecdotal reports of Morgellons came from the area.

Culling through Kaiser patient records from July 2006 through June 2008, the team found—and was able to reach—115 who had what sounded like Morgellons. Most were middle-aged white women. They were not clustered in any one spot.

That led to the finding that Morgellons occurred in roughly 4 out of every 100,000 Kaiser enrollees. "So it's rare," Eberhard said.

Roughly 100 agreed to at least answer survey questions, and about 40 consented to a battery of physical and psychological tests that stretched over several days.



AP

This photo provided by Centers for Disease Control shows a case-patient with skin lesions, left, and a close-up of one of the lesions with mysterious blue fibers sprouting from the skin, published as part of a CDC study on Morgellons.

Oral cancer virus affects 7 percent of Americans

By LINDSEY TANNER
AP MEDICAL WRITER

CHICAGO (AP)—About 16 million Americans have oral HPV, a sexually transmitted virus more commonly linked with cervical cancer that also can cause mouth cancer, according to the first nationwide estimate.

HPV—human papilloma virus—is increasingly recognized as a major cause of oral cancers affecting the back of the tongue and tonsil area. Smoking and heavy drinking are also key causes.

Until now, it was not known how many people have oral HPV infections.

Overall, 7 percent of Americans aged 14 to 69 are infected, the study found.

But the results are not cause for alarm. While mouth cancers are on the rise—probably from oral sex—most people with oral HPV will never develop cancer. And most don't have the kind most strongly linked to cancer. Also, tests for oral HPV are costly and mainly used in research.

Still, experts say the study provides important information for future research that could increase knowledge about who is most at risk for oral cancer and ways to prevent the disease.

The nationally representative study is based on 30-second gargle tests given to about 5,500 people in a 2009-10 government health survey. Their mouthwash samples were tested for HPV.

The results were published online Thursday in the Journal of the American Medical Association.

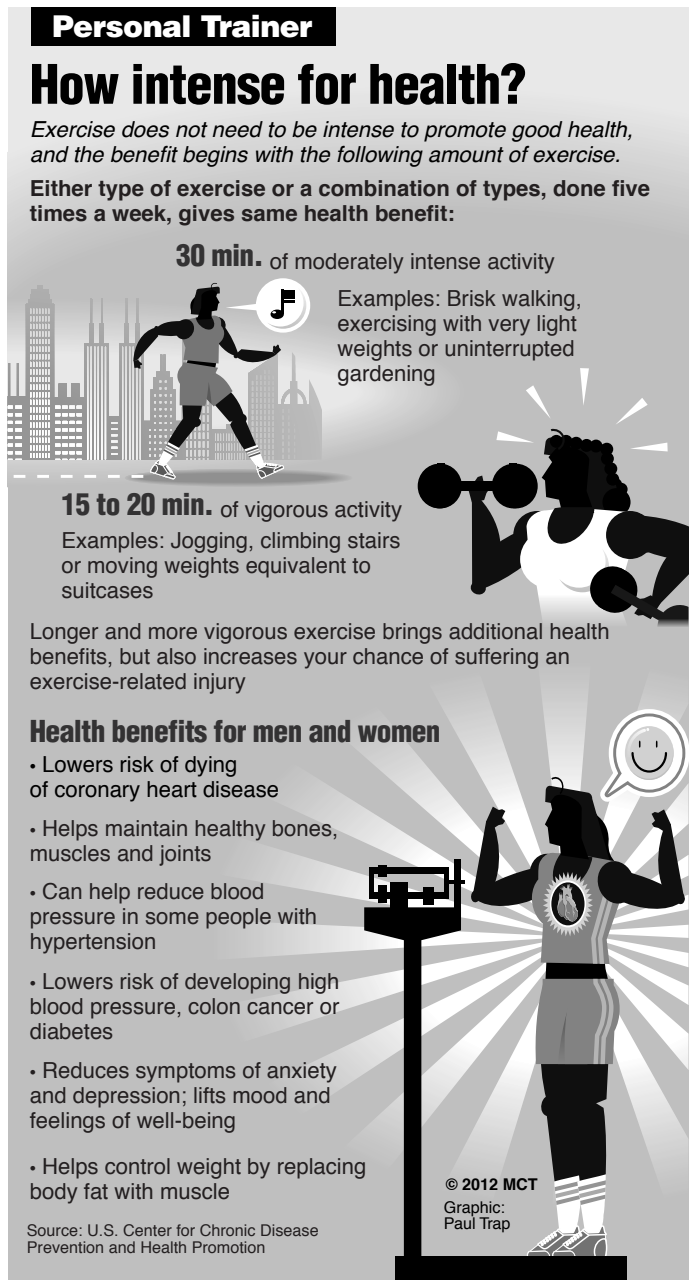
There are many types of HPV, but one in particular, known as HPV-16, is most strongly linked with oral cancer and also is a common cause of cervical cancer. That form was found in about 1 percent of people studied, translating to about 2 million Americans.

Dr. Maura Gillison, the lead author and a researcher at Ohio State University, said the study "provides us some reassurance" that most people with oral HPV will not get oral cancer. Millions may have oral HPV, but fewer than 15,000 Americans get HPV-linked oral cancer each year.

She said the study should prompt research into whether the existing vaccines for cervical cancer protect against oral HPV, too.

Gillison has consulted with Merck & Co., and GlaxoSmithKline, makers of HPV vaccines. Ohio State, Merck and the National Cancer Institute helped pay for the study.

Dr. Ezra Cohen, a head and neck cancer specialist at the University of Chicago, said the study provides important information confirming similarities in risk factors for HPV oral infections and oral cancer.


Personal Trainer
How intense for health?
Exercise does not need to be intense to promote good health, and the benefit begins with the following amount of exercise.
Either type of exercise or a combination of types, done five times a week, gives same health benefit:
30 min. of moderately intense activity
Examples: Brisk walking, exercising with very light weights or uninterrupted gardening
15 to 20 min. of vigorous activity
Examples: Jogging, climbing stairs or moving weights equivalent to suitcases
Longer and more vigorous exercise brings additional health benefits, but also increases your chance of suffering an exercise-related injury
Health benefits for men and women
• Lowers risk of dying of coronary heart disease
• Helps maintain healthy bones, muscles and joints
• Can help reduce blood pressure in some people with hypertension
• Lowers risk of developing high blood pressure, colon cancer or diabetes
• Reduces symptoms of anxiety and depression; lifts mood and feelings of well-being
• Helps control weight by replacing body fat with muscle
Source: U.S. Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion
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Graphic: Paul Trap

Life & Style

911 call reveals frantic efforts to help Demi Moore

AP

In this Oct. 17, 2011 file photo, actress Demi Moore attends the premiere of "Margin Call" in New York.

By RAQUEL MARIA DILLON
ASSOCIATED PRESS

LOS ANGELES (AP)—A 911 recording revealed frantic efforts by friends of Demi Moore to get help for the actress who was convulsing as they gathered around her and tried to comfort her.

Moore was "semi-conscious, barely," according to a female caller on the recording released Friday by Los Angeles fire officials.

The woman tells emergency operators that Moore, 49, had smoked something before she was rushed to the hospital on Monday night and that she had been "having issues lately."

"Is she breathing normal?" the operator asks.

"No, not so normal. More kind of shaking, convulsing, burning up," the friend says as she hurries to Moore's side, on the edge of panic.

Another woman is next to Moore as the dispatcher asks if she's responsive.

"Demi, can you hear me?" she asks. "Yes, she's squeezing hands. ... She can't speak."

When the operator asks what Moore ingested or smoked, the friend replies, but the answer was redacted.

Asked if Moore took the substance intentionally or not, the woman says Moore ingested it on purpose but the reaction was accidental.

"Whatever she took, make sure you have it out for the paramedics," the operator says.

The operator asks the friend if this has happened before.

"I don't know," she says. "There's been some stuff recently that we're all just finding out."

Moore's publicist, Carrie Gordon, said previously that the actress sought professional help to treat her exhaustion and improve her health. She would not comment further on the emergency call or provide details about the nature or location of Moore's treatment.

The past few months have been rocky for Moore.

She released a statement in November announcing she had decided to end her marriage to fellow actor Ashton Kutcher, 33, following news of alleged infidelity. The two were known to publicly share their affection for one another via Twitter.

Moore still has a Twitter account under the name mrskutcher but has not posted any messages since Jan. 7.

Meanwhile, Millennium Films announced Friday that Sarah Jessica Parker will replace Moore in the role of feminist Gloria Steinem in its production of "Lovelace," a biopic about the late porn star Linda Lovelace. A statement gave no reason for the change. The production, starring Amanda Seyfried, has been shooting in Los Angeles since Dec. 20.

During the call, the woman caller says the group of friends had turned Moore's head to the side and was holding her down. The dispatcher tells her not to hold her down but to wipe her mouth and nose and watch her closely until paramedics arrive.

"Make sure that we keep an airway open," the dispatcher says. "Even if she passes out completely, that's OK. Stay right with her."

The phone is passed around by four people, including a woman who gives directions to the gate and another who recounts details about what Moore smoked or ingested. Finally, the phone is given to a man named James, so one of the women can hold Moore's head.

There was some confusion at the beginning of the call. The emergency response was delayed by nearly two minutes as Los Angeles and Beverly Hills dispatchers sorted out which city had jurisdiction over the street where Moore lives.

As the call is transferred to Beverly Hills, the frantic woman at Moore's house raises her voice and said, "Why is an ambulance not on its way right now?"

"Ma'am, instead of arguing with me why an ambulance is not on the way, can you spell (the street name) for me?" the Beverly Hills dispatcher says.

Although the estate is located in the 90210 ZIP code above Benedict Canyon, the response was eventually handled by the Los Angeles Fire Department.

By the end of the call, Moore has improved.

"She seems to have calmed down now. She's speaking," the male caller told the operator.

Moore and Kutcher were wed in September 2005.

Kutcher became a stepfather to Moore's three daughters—Rumer, Scout and Tallulah Belle—from her 13-year marriage to actor Bruce Willis. Moore and Willis divorced in 2000 but remained friendly.

Moore can be seen on screen in the recent films "Margin Call" and "Another Happy Day." Kutcher replaced Charlie Sheen on TV's "Two and a Half Men" and is part of the ensemble film "New Year's Eve."

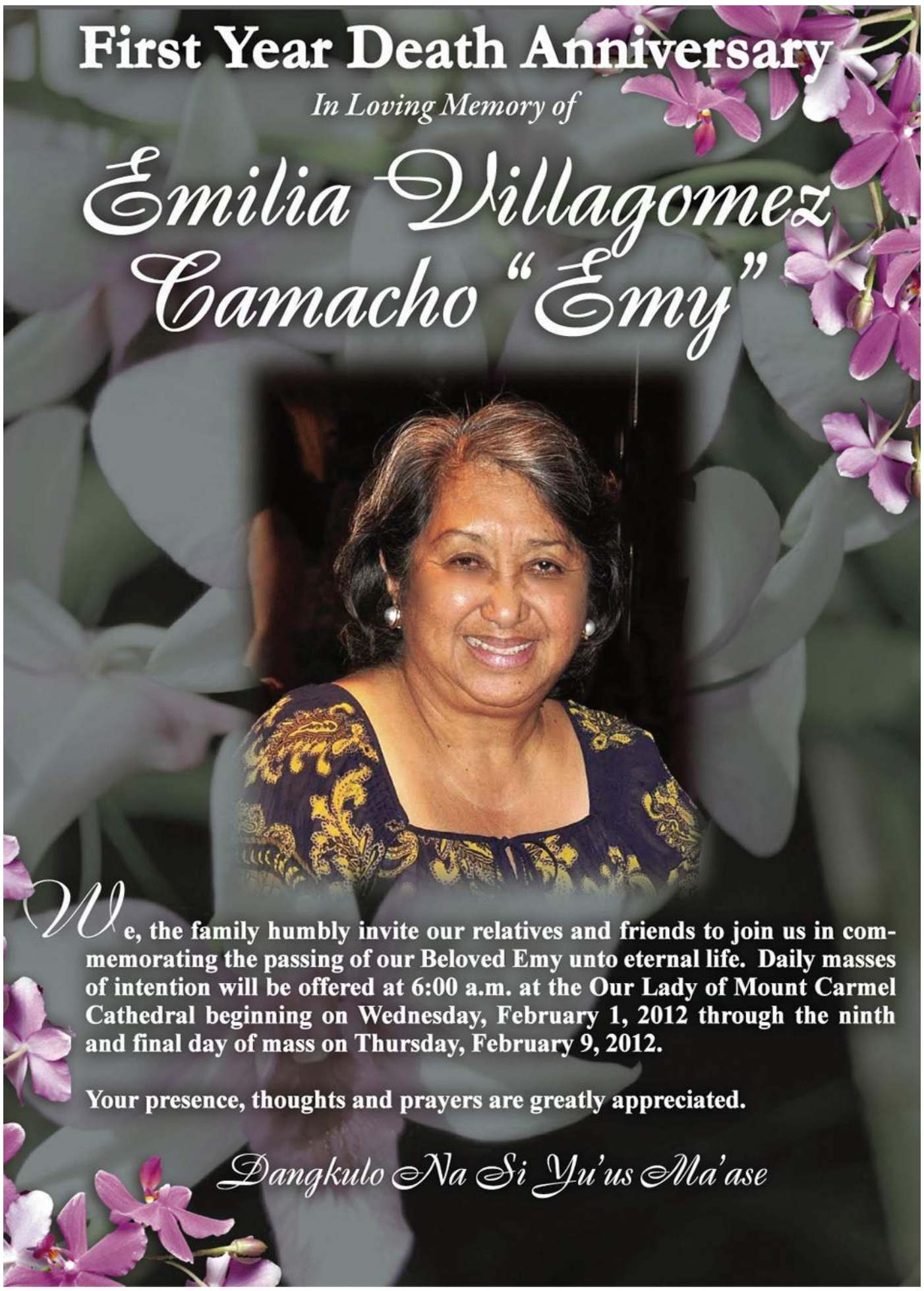
Michel Hazanavicius wins top prize from the Directors Guild

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Michel Hazanavicius has won the top film honor at the Directors Guild of America Awards for his silent movie "The Artist," giving him the inside track for the best-director prize at the Academy Awards.

Hazanavicius

French filmmaker Hazanavicius, whose credits include the "OSS 117" spy spoofs, had been a virtual unknown in Hollywood until "The Artist," his black-and-white throwback to early cinema that has been a favorite at earlier film honors.

The Directors Guild honors are one of the most-accurate forecasts for who might go on to take home an Oscar. Only six times in the 63-year history of the guild awards has the winner failed to win the Oscar for best director. And more often than not, whichever film earns the directing Oscar also wins best picture.


First Year Death Anniversary
In Loving Memory of
Emilia Villagomez
Camacho "Emy"
We, the family humbly invite our relatives and friends to join us in commemorating the passing of our Beloved Emy unto eternal life. Daily masses of intention will be offered at 6:00 a.m. at the Our Lady of Mount Carmel Cathedral beginning on Wednesday, February 1, 2012 through the ninth and final day of mass on Thursday, February 9, 2012.
Your presence, thoughts and prayers are greatly appreciated.
Dangkulo Na Si Yu'us Ma'ase

Actress' claim to be gay by choice riles activists

By LISA LEFF
ASSOCIATED PRESS

SAN FRANCISCO (AP)—Cynthia Nixon learned the hard way this week that when it comes to gay civil rights, the personal is always political. Very political.

The actress best known for portraying fiery lawyer Miranda Hobbes on "Sex and the City" is up to her perfectly arched eyebrows in controversy since The New York Times Magazine published a profile in which she was quoted as saying that for her, being gay was a conscious choice. Nixon is engaged to a woman with whom she has been in a relationship for eight years. Before that, she spent 15 years and had two children with a man.

"I understand that for many people it's not, but for me it's a choice, and you don't get to define my gayness for me," Nixon said while recounting some of the flak gay rights activists previously had given her for treading in similar territory. "A certain section of our community is very concerned that it not be seen as a choice, because if it's a choice, then we could opt out. I say it doesn't matter if we flew here or we swam here, it matters that we are here and we are one group and let us stop trying to make a litmus test for who is considered gay and who is not."

To say that a certain segment of the gay community "is very concerned that it not be seen as a choice" is an understatement. Gay rights activists have worked hard to combat the idea that people decide to be physically attracted to same-sex partners any more than they choose to be attracted to opposite-sex ones because the question, so far unanswered by science, is often used by religious conservatives, including GOP presidential candidate Rick Santorum and former candidate Michelle Bachman, to argue that homosexuality is immoral behavior, not an inherent trait.

Among the activists most horrified by Nixon's comments was Truth Wins Out founder Wayne Besen, whose organization monitors and tries to debunk programs that claim to cure people of same-sex attractions with therapy. Besen said he found the actress' analysis irresponsible and flippant, despite her ample caveats.

AP

This is a Tuesday, May 25, 2010 file photo of actress Cynthia Nixon attending the Designing Women Awards in New York.

"Cynthia did not put adequate thought into the ramifications of her words, and it is going to be used when some kid comes out and their parents force them into some ex-gay camp while she's off drinking cocktails at fancy parties," Besen said. "When people say it's a choice, they are greenlighting an enormous amount of abuse because if it's a choice, people will try to influence and guide young people to what they perceive as the right choice."

Nixon's publicist did not respond to an e-mail asking if the actress wished to comment on the criticism.

While the broader gay rights movement recognizes that human sexuality exists on a spectrum, and has found common cause with transgender and bisexual people, Nixon may have unwittingly given aid and comfort to those who want to deny same-sex couples the right to marry, adopt children and secure equal spousal benefits, said Jennifer Pizer, legal director of the Williams Institute on Sexual Orientation and the Law, a pro-gay think tank based at the University of California, Los Angeles.

One of the factors courts consider in determining if a law is unconstitutional is whether members of the minority group it targets share an unchangeable or "immutable" trait, Pizer noted. Although the definition of how fixed a characteristic has to be to qualify as immutable still is evolving—religious affiliation, for example, is recognized as grounds for equal protection—the U.S. Supreme Court still has not included sexual orientation among the traits "so integral to personhood it's not something the government should require people to change," she said.

"If gay people in this country had more confidence that their individual freedom was going to be respected, then the temperature would lower a bit on the immutability question because the idea of it being a choice wouldn't seem to stack the deck against their rights," Pizer said.

Nixon stirred the identity politics pot further when she explained in a follow-up interview with The Daily Beast this week that she purposefully rejected identifying herself as bisexual even though her history suggested it was an accurate term.

"I don't pull out the "bisexual" word because nobody likes the bisexuals. Everybody likes to dump on the bisexuals," she said. "But I do completely feel that when I was in relationships with men, I was in love and in lust with those men. And then I met (her fiance) Christine and I fell in love and lust with her. I am completely the same person and I was not walking around in some kind of fog. I just responded to the people in front of me the way I truly felt."

Although science has not identified either a purely biological or sociological basis for sexual orientation, University of California, Davis psychologist Gregory Herek, an expert on anti-gay prejudice, said Nixon's experience is consistent with research showing that women have an easier time moving between opposite and same-sex partners.

A survey Herek conducted of gay men, lesbians and bisexuals of both genders bore this out. Sixteen percent of the lesbians surveyed reported they felt they had had a fair amount of choice in their sexual orientations, while only five percent of the gay men did. Among bisexuals, the figures were 40 percent for men and 45 percent for women.

What remains to be teased out, Herek said, is how a representative national sample of heterosexuals would answer the same question, and what people mean when their sexual orientation was a choice or not. Are they talking about their sexual desires? Acting on those desires? Or simply the identity they choose to show to the world?

"The nature vs. nurture debate really is passe," he said. "The debate is not really an either/or debate in the vast majority of cases, but how much of each. We don't know how big a role biology plays and how big a role culture plays. A possibility not often discussed is it's not the same for everybody."

Bradley Cooper, Zoe Saldana celebrate at Sundance

By SANDY COHEN
AP ENTERTAINMENT WRITER

PARK CITY, Utah (AP)—Bradley Cooper and Zoe Saldana came to the Sundance Film Festival to promote their closing-night film, "The Words."

The two actors play a married couple in the movie, which follows an aspiring writer who gains fame when he finds an old manuscript and passes it off as his own.

The pair avoided any appearance of their reported off-screen romance by staying apart from one another while posing for photos and giving interviews to support the film. Saldana did affectionately touch Cooper as they passed in a hallway, though.

Both had been to Sundance before, where snow fell throughout the festival and the weather dipped into the teens. Still, Saldana maintained her fashionista edge.

"I did bring warm stuff but I also brought fashion-y stuff. Come on. You've got to pay the price, even if it's too cold," she said.

The 33-year-old actress wore green suede shoes with spiked stiletto heels despite the slushy conditions.

"They're kind of fabulous. They're also lethal. So I have to be really careful, and somebody has to be careful not to piss me off," she said with a smile. "Yeah right. I'm just trying not to fall. It's like `Please don't fall. Please don't fall,' if I'm walking."

Cooper's first time at the festival was 12 years earlier with the eventual cult comedy hit "Wet Hot American Summer."

"I wasn't even able to get into the screening," he recalled.

Saldana said playing Cooper's wife in "The Words" made her think about how she approaches relationships and the concept of unconditional love.

"Like how unconditional am I when I'm in love. Do you bypass certain things? Would I be able to be with a man—or with someone—that feels incomplete, doesn't matter what we do?" she said. "If we change this, if we get married, if we have a baby—just someone that feels incomplete. Would I be able to deal with that for so many years and accept them as who they are and go, `Come as you are. This is who I fell in love with and I don't want to change you?'

"I'm not like that, which is why I wanted to play her, because it was a challenge, you know. Look at me, I totally said I'm not unconditional at all. So awful."

Cooper's part as author-plagiarist Rory Jansen is his second writerly role after playing a novelist in last year's "Limitless." But that's just coincidence, he said. Despite having a degree in English, the 37-year-old actor says he typically only writes in his "girlnal."

"Journal, sorry," he said. "That's a `Wet Hot' reference. Paul Rudd says that."

Saldana, meanwhile, is in the midst of shooting the "Star Trek" sequel in Los Angeles with director J.J. Abrams and much of the original's cast.

"It's wonderful because I've been dying to work with the cast again, to work with JJ," she said. "I love him so much. He's such an amazing human being and such an amazing storyteller and a great director, so what more can I ask for? I start the year and I'm literally going back to a very familiar environment and being a part of a great story."

"The Words," which also stars Dennis Quaid, Jeremy Irons, Ben Barnes and Olivia Wilde, premiered Friday. It was acquired early in the festival by CBS Films, which plans to release it theatrically in the fall. Sundance continues through Sunday.

AP

Actress Zoe Saldana, left, co-writer and co-director Lee Sternthal, center, and actor Bradley Cooper pose at the premiere of "The Words" during the 2012 Sundance Film Festival in Park City, Utah on Friday, Jan. 27, 2012.

Doctor convicted in Jackson death seeks release

LOS ANGELES (AP)—The doctor convicted of involuntary manslaughter in Michael Jackson's death asked a judge Friday to release him from jail pending his appeal.

Dr. Conrad Murray, who is serving a four-year jail sentence, said in a declaration that he should be released either on his own recognizance or on bail with electronic monitoring.

He said he is not a danger to society, will not flee the area, and wants to work to help support his seven children.

His lawyer, J. Michael Flanagan, said in the motion that Murray knows he cannot work as a doctor but would find other employment. He suggested the sentence and Murray's mode of confinement is extremely severe for a man with no prior criminal record.

He said Murray is being held in solitary confinement and is chained to a table when he meets with his lawyers. He also said Murray is extremely sorrowful about Jackson's death.

Jackson died in June 2009 from an overdose of the anesthetic propofol, administered by Murray. Flanagan conceded that Murray made some medical misjudgments but said he never intended harm to Jackson.

Murray's appeal has not yet been filed, but the motion offered a preview of some issues that will be raised, including the claim that Superior Court Judge Michael Pastor should have allowed testimony about Jackson's financial condition.

Flanagan said the exclusion of that evidence "seriously compromised the defendant's ability to demonstrate the desperate situation which was guiding the decisions and choices of both Mr. Jackson and Dr. Murray."

Murray appeared to be blaming Jackson for decisions that led to his death.

"Mr. Jackson was an uncooperative patient who made decisions and demands based upon his particular needs," said Flanagan. "One of which was his extremely precarious financial situation complicated by drug addiction. "

Flanagan also cited the judge's refusal to sequester the jury and the presence of cameras in the courtroom as appellate issues.

With Murray's appeal expected to take more than a year to move through the courts, the attorney said it would be unfair to keep him jailed in the interim.

Under sentencing guidelines, Murray is expected to serve no more than half of his sentence. The attorney said if he served his complete sentence he would not receive the benefits of a favorable appeal decision if his case was overturned.

A hearing on the motion was set for Feb. 24.

Etta James remembered as triumphant trailblazer

By ANTHONY McCARTNEY
AP ENTERTAINMENT WRITER

GARDENA, Calif. (AP)—Etta James was remembered at a service Saturday attended by hundreds of friends, family and fans as a woman who triumphed against all odds to break down cultural and musical barriers in a style that was unfailingly honest.

The Rev. Al Sharpton eulogized James in a rousing speech, describing her remarkable rise from poverty and pain to become a woman whose music became an enduring anthem for weddings and commercials.

Perhaps most famously, President Barack Obama and the first lady shared their first inaugural ball dance to a version of the song sung by Beyonce. Sharpton on Saturday opened his remarks by reading a statement from the president.

"Etta will be remembered for her legendary voice and her contributions to our nation's musical heritage," Obama's statement read.

The Grammy-winning singer died Jan. 20 after battling leukemia and other ailments, including dementia. She had retreated from public life in recent years, but on Saturday her legacy was on display as mourners of all ages and races converged on the City of Refuge church in Gardena, south of downtown Los Angeles.

Among the stars performing tributes to James were Stevie Wonder and Christina Aguilera, who told the gathering that she has included "At Last" in every concert she's performed as a tribute to her musical inspiration.

Wonder performed three songs, including "Shelter In the Rain" and a harmonica solo. James' rose-draped casket was on display, surrounded by wreaths and floral arrangements and pictures of the singer.

Sharpton, who met James when he was an up-and-coming preacher, credited her with helping break down racial barriers through her music.

"She was able to get us on the same rhythms and humming the same ballads and understanding each other's melodies way before we could even use the same hotels," Sharpton said.

He said James' fame and influence would have been unthinkable to a woman with James' background—growing up in a broken home during segregation and at times battling her own demons.

"The genius of Etta James is she flipped the script," Sharpton said, alluding to her struggles with addiction, which she eventually overcame.

"She waited until she turned her pain into power," he said, adding that it turned her story away from being a tragic one into one of triumph.

"You beat `em Etta," Sharpton said in concluding his eulogy. "At last. At last. At last!"

AP

Stevie Wonder performs at the funeral of singer Etta James, Saturday, Jan. 28, 2012, at Greater Bethany Community Church City of Refuge in Gardena, Calif.

SAG Awards menu is months in the making

By SANDY COHEN
AP ENTERTAINMENT WRITER

LOS ANGELES (AP)—When your dinner party guests include Brad Pitt, George Clooney, Kate Winslet and Glenn Close, and the whole affair is televised live, it can take months to plan the menu. That's why the team behind the Screen Actors Guild Awards began putting together the plate for Sunday's ceremony months ago.

It was still summer when show producer Kathy Connell and executive producer and director Jeff Margolis first sat down with chef Suzanne Goins of Los Angeles eatery Lucques with a tall order: Create a meal that is delicious at room temperature, looks beautiful on TV, is easy to eat and appeals to Hollywood tastes. Oh, and no poppy seeds, soups, spicy dishes, or piles of onions or garlic.

"It can't drip, stick in their teeth or be too heavy," Connell said. "We have to appease all palates."

The chef put together a plate of possibilities: slow-roasted salmon with yellow beets, lamb with couscous and spiced cauliflower and roasted root vegetables with quinoa. There was also a chopped chicken salad and another chicken dish with black beans.

To ensure the dishes are both tasty and TV-ready, Connell and Margolis, along with the SAG Awards Committee and the show's florist and art director, dined together at this summertime lunch on tables set to replicate those that will be in the Shrine Exposition Center during the ceremony. The pewter, crushed-silk tablecloths and white lilies you'll see on TV Sunday were also chosen months ago.

The diners discussed the look of the plate, the size of the portions and the vegetarian possibilities.

"We'd like the portions a little larger," Connell told the chef.

"And a little more sauce on the salmon," Margolis added.

Come Sunday, it's up to Goins to prepare 1,200 of the long-planned meals for the A-list audience.

'Beasts of the Southern Wild' wins at Sundance

PARK CITY, Utah (AP)—A mythical film starring an 8-year-old girl and a documentary about the war on drugs took top honors at the Sundance Film Festival.

"Beasts of the Southern Wild" won the grand jury prize in the U.S. dramatic competition, and "The House I Live In" won the same award in the U.S. documentary category Saturday in Park City, Utah.

Directed and co-written by 29-year-old first-time filmmaker Benh Zeitlin, "Beasts of the Southern Wild" follows a girl named Hushpuppy who lives with her father in the southern Delta. The film also won the cinematography prize.

Eugene Jarecki's documentary "The House I Live In" examines the social, human and financial costs of the war on drugs. Jarecki won the same award in 2005 for his documentary "Why We Fight."

SHOWBIZ TIDBITS

Dr. Phil interviews parents of missing KC baby

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (AP)—The family of a missing Kansas City baby has taped an appearance on the "Dr. Phil" show. Viewers can tune in Friday to watch the interview with Lisa Irwin's parents and a private investigator who's searching for her. Lisa was reported missing Oct. 4 when her father, Jeremy Irwin, came home from work around 4 a.m. and couldn't find her. Irwin and Deborah Bradley say they think someone broke into the house and took their daughter. Deborah Bradley has said police have accused her of being involved in Lisa's disappearance. In tearful statements to the media early on, Bradley has repeatedly insisted she doesn't know what happened to her child. No suspects have been named, despite an intensive search.

Hawaii musician pleads no contest in molestation

HONOLULU (AP)—A popular Hawaii entertainer has pleaded no contest to molesting two girls in the 1990s and has been sentenced to a year in jail. A Los Angeles judge also sentenced Cecilio Rodriguez on Friday to 52 weeks of sexual-offender counseling and five years' probation. The 67-year-old Rodriguez is part of the longtime musical duo Cecilio & Kapono. He was arrested in September in Los Angeles County and charged with lewd and lascivious acts with a child under 14. KHON-TV reports that both victims, sisters who are now adults, tearfully told the judge that Rodriguez violated their parents' trust. Cecilio & Kapono, simply known as C&K, formed on Oahu's North Shore in 1973 when Rodriguez and Henry Kapono were introduced by mutual friends. Kapono couldn't immediately be reached for comment.

TV show choreographer gets 10 years for rape

LOS ANGELES (AP)—A salsa dance instructor who worked on the TV show "So You Think You Can Dance" has been sentenced in Los Angeles to 10 years in prison for raping one woman and assaulting another. Prosecutors say Alex Da Silva gave dance lessons at salsa clubs where he met aspiring dancers he assaulted. The assaults were not related to the TV show. Da Silva was convicted of raping a 22-year-old woman in 2002 and attacking another woman with intent to commit rape in 2009. The jury deadlocked on four other counts, including two more alleged rapes. Those counts were dismissed. A defense attorney says the women who accused Da Silva were not telling the truth. Da Silva will be required to register as a sex offender for life.

Unreleased ABBA track on new album

STOCKHOLM (AP)—Mamma Mia, here they go again. ABBA fans will soon again be saying "Thank you for the music" with the release of a new track on a special edition of the disbanded 70's pop group's "The Visitors" album. The record, including new track "From a Twinkling Star to a Passing Angel," is the first official new release by the Swedish group in 18 years. Universal Music Group spokeswoman Mia Segolsson said Friday that the special edition of "The Visitors"—originally released in 1981—will be available in stores from April 23. ABBA—Agnetha Faeltskog, Benny Andersson, Bjoern Ulvaeus and Anni-Frid Lyngstad—split in 1982. The band has never reunited.

Sisters' spat is no reason to ruin husband's reunion

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby

DEAR ABBY: My wife, "Kate," and her sister, "Judy," do not get along, to the point that my wife refuses to be in the same room with her. I have a class reunion coming up, and Judy is in my class.

Because we're not sure Judy will show up, Kate has said she will attend—but she'll leave if Judy arrives. We had planned on going in separate cars so Kate could escape if necessary. But now she says if Judy puts in an appearance, she'll be upset with me if I don't leave with her.

I don't get along with Judy either, but I'd like the chance to catch up with other classmates. Kate feels my not leaving with her would demonstrate a lack of support. I don't want my wife's antipathy toward her sister to cause me to be penalized. What to do?

IN THE MIDDLE

DEAR IN: Remind your wife that it's your reunion, not hers. Tell her you plan to go and catch up with your former classmates, and if she'd like to accompany you, you would love to have her at your side. If Judy shows up, it will be two against one. But if seeing Judy would be too upsetting for her, you'll understand if she decides to stay home. It's her choice.

■■■

DEAR ABBY: I'm a mature woman who has been seeing a gentleman for five months. We have dinner together, go dancing, watch movies, have game nights with friends, etc. We are together at least four nights a week, and each night it ends the same way. We sit close, hold hands for almost an hour, kiss for several minutes, hug, and then go our separate ways. I'm ready for more.

Don't get me wrong. I'm not looking for marriage. But along with really enjoying his company, I'm very physically attracted to him. We're both kind of shy.

Can you suggest any non-threatening way to bring up the subject of becoming more intimate? Or should I continue to just wait for him to make a move?

STUCK AT FIRST BASE IN CALIFORNIA

DEAR STUCK AT FIRST BASE: I assume that the gentleman you're seeing is also "mature." Has it occurred to you that he may no longer be able to perform in that department? And if not, how will that affect you?

The time is right to broach the subject of what's missing. A way to go about it would be to tell him you care about him and ask him if you are attractive to him—and if the answer is yes, follow up by asking why he has been hesitant to take your relationship any further. Then listen.

■■■

DEAR ABBY: How do you curb a sweet tooth? I sometimes wake up with the urge to eat sweets at night. This is a big weakness of mine.

NEEDS TO CURB THE CRAVING

DEAR NEEDS: I'm glad you asked, because it gives me a chance to share a technique that works for me. When you have a sweets craving, get up and go brush your TEETH! When you're done, the craving will be less.

■■■

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

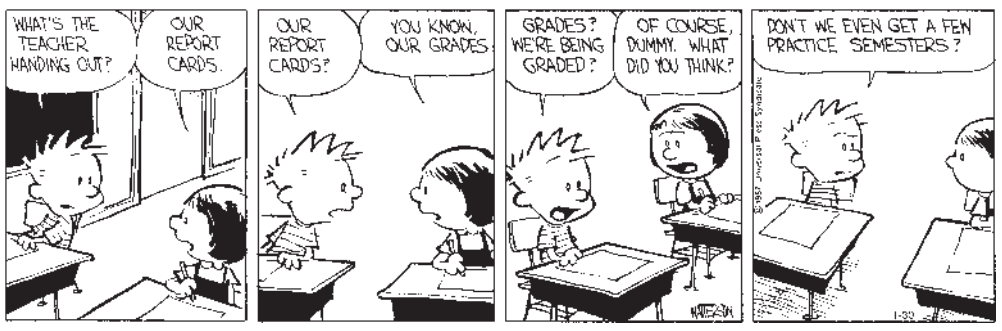
■■■

To receive a collection of Abby's most memorable—and most frequently requested—poems and essays, send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for $7 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby—Keepers Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. Shipping and handling are included in the price.

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson


WHAT'S THE TEACHER HANDING OUT?
OUR REPORT CARDS.
OUR REPORT CARDS?
YOU KNOW, OUR GRADES.
GRADES? WE'RE BEING GRADED?
OF COURSE, DUMMY. WHAT DID YOU THINK?
DON'T WE EVEN GET A FEW PRACTICE SEMESTERS?
1-30

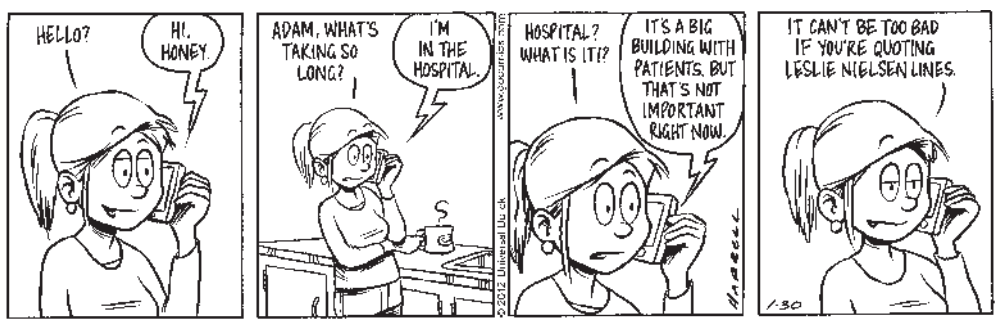
Garfield®

By Jim Davis

ALL IS RIGHT IN THE WORLD
TODAY HAS BEEN ONE DISASTER AFTER ANOTHER
FORTUNATELY, THE WORLD ONLY CARES ABOUT ME
JIM DAVIS 1-30
Distributed by Universal Uclick www.facebook.com/garfield

Adam@home

By Bryan Basset


HELLO?
HI, HONEY.
ADAM, WHAT'S TAKING SO LONG?
I'M IN THE HOSPITAL.
HOSPITAL? WHAT IS IT!?
IT'S A BIG BUILDING WITH PATIENTS, BUT THAT'S NOT IMPORTANT RIGHT NOW.
IT CAN'T BE TOO BAD IF YOU'RE QUOTING LESLIE NIELSEN LINES.
1-30

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy

SOMETIMES I FEEL SO INSIGNIFICANT.
WHEN YOU CONSIDER THE VASTNESS OF THE UNIVERSE, DOES IT REALLY MATTER HOW YOU FEEL?
THANKS.
1-30

CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

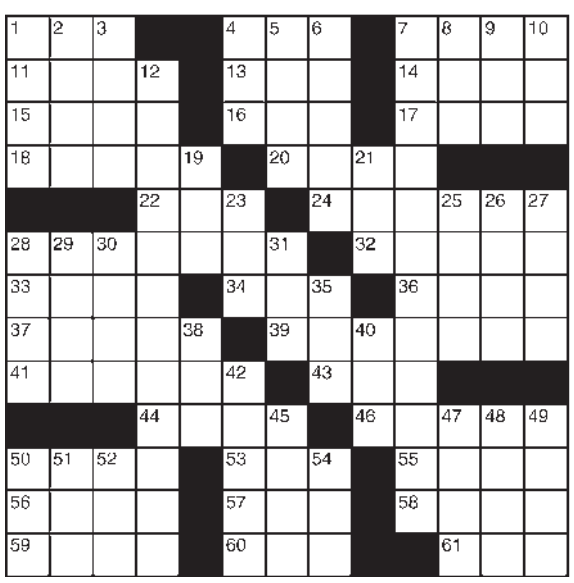
ACROSS
1 Demon
4 That woman
7 Banshee's cry
11 Bridle strap
13 Church seating
14 Without acting
15 Greek vowel
16 Exist
17 Apportion (out)
18 Honey bunch?
20 Highland hillside
22 Cage component
24 Machine-gun by plane
28 Wheedled
32 Olympics award
33 Acknowledge
34 Used a shovel
36 Supermarket stack
37 River embankment
39 Varied
41 California city
43 Hawaiian garland
44 Prisoner's room
46 Oust
50 Leaping insect
53 Slight touch
55 See 45-Down
56 Freeway access
57 — out a living
58 Reddish horse
59 Chills and fever
60 Butterfly catcher
61 "To be or — to be"

DOWN
1 Eye part
2 Cat's call
3 Pocket bread
4 Hot tub
5 KFC flavorer
6 Basin accessories
7 Football position
8 Commotion
9 Under the weather
10 Caustic solution
12 Cliffhanger, often
19 Wire measure
21 $ dispenser
23 Foundation
25 Hebrew month
26 Bleacherites
27 Otherwise
28 Young bovine
29 State with certainty
30 Jupiter's alias
31 Flop
35 Hodges of baseball lore
38 Away from WSW
40 Geese's formation
42 Bygone
45 With 55-Across, War of 1812 battle site
47 Press
48 "Arrivederci"
49 Bivouac shelter
50 Monk's title
51 Trail behind
52 Ostrich's cousin
54 Wager

Solution time: 24 mins.

	B	L	A	N	C		F	I	O	O	R	
C	H	A	D	O	R		O	O	D	L	E	S
H	U	D	D	L	E		C	U	D	D	L	E
I	T	D			L	E	M	U	R		B	A	D
L	A	I	D			P	A	S		M	O	T	E
I	N	E	R	T			D	E	L	A	Y	E	R
			Y	A	W		D	U	O				
F	A	N	A	T	I	C		G	R	A	P	E	
A	G	E	D		T	O	R		I	M	A	M	
R	O	E		U	N	Z	I	P		I	R	E	
M	U	D	D	L	E		P	U	D	D	L	E	
S	T	E	I	N	S		E	R	A	S	E	R	
	I	D	E	A	S		N	A	T	T	Y		

Saturday's answer 1-30



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Wilmer Valderrama, 32; Christian Bale, 38; Charles S. Dutton, 61; Vanessa Redgrave, 75.

Happy Birthday: You don't have to impress anyone. Do what you can, and don't feel bad if someone expects more. Gauge your time wisely to ensure that what's important to you is taken care of first. Get rid of negative baggage and start fresh. Rethink your strategy and make the necessary changes to improve your future. Your numbers are 8, 10, 19, 26, 29, 33, 41.

ARIES (*March 21-April 19*): Be open to alternative methods. You may be surprised by the options you have if you take a practical approach to something you thought to be complex. Simplicity will inspire a new perspective on the way you do things. ✪✪✪

TAURUS (*April 20-May 20*): Too much of anything will work against you. Excess is the enemy; moderation is key to your success. Think before you make a move. A mistake can cost you emotionally, professionally and financially. Focus on strengthening your position. ✪✪✪

GEMINI (*May 21-June 20*): Keep your thoughts to yourself. You may have some good ideas, but you will be blamed for meddling. Plant a seed and let whomever you are dealing with come up with the idea. Avoid unnecessary arguments. ✪✪✪

CANCER (*June 21-July 22*): Show kindness and generosity by lending a helping hand, and you will ensure you get the same in return when you need a favor. An idea to improve your living arrangements will lead to good fortune and a better future. ✪✪✪✪

LEO (*July 23-Aug. 22*): Overbearing will lead to limitations at work and at home. Give others a chance to explore possibilities. Taking over will only make you look like a bully. Not everything has to be done according to your specifications. ✪✪

VIRGO (*Aug. 23-Sept. 22*): A short trip or searching for information that will help you excel will also lead to an interesting encounter with someone special. Love is in the stars, and partnerships will bring positive results. Don't wait for things to come to you. Take action. ✪✪✪✪✪

LIBRA (*Sept. 23-Oct. 22*): You'll have a brilliant idea, but the cost may reflect failure if you don't remodel your plans to fit your budget. Talks will help you decipher what's most important, if you take heed of what's being said. ✪✪✪

SCORPIO (*Oct. 23-Nov. 21*): Don't limit the possibilities due to fear of failure. Disregard what others say or try to lead you to believe. Trust in your talent and ability and you will outshine anyone who challenges or chooses to compete with you. ✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS (*Nov. 22-Dec. 21*): Alter your decision if that's what it takes to keep the peace at home or work. Don't bother arguing an insignificant point. Concentrate more on your own creative ideas and how you can put them into play. Silence is golden. ✪✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN (*Dec. 22-Jan. 19*): Take pride in what you have. Don't let anyone belittle you or make you feel guilty. Look at your strengths and apply them to whatever you do personally, professionally and financially and you will find success. ✪✪✪✪✪

AQUARIUS (*Jan. 20-Feb. 18*): Don't jeopardize a chance to make extra cash by giving the impression you don't need help. It's important to take advantage of opportunities that come your way. Budgeting for your future and the things you want to achieve must take top priority. ✪✪

PISCES (*Feb. 19-March 20*): A practical approach to an old idea will open up interest in what you have to offer. Regroup and gather the people you feel can contribute to your success. Bury old grudges before you begin a new phase in your life. Love is highlighted. ✪✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are intuitively intelligent, remarkably sensitive and determined to reach your goals.

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SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

	6			3		2		
7			8		2	1	5	
			9	6			3	7
	5	1					6	
9		2		1		5		3
	8					4	2	
1	3			2	4			
	2	9	1		7			8
		7		9			1	

Difficulty Level ★ 1/30

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Last Saturday's SUDOKU Answer

9	3	5	4	6	7	1	2	8
2	6	8	5	9	1	3	7	4
4	1	7	2	3	8	6	9	5
7	8	2	6	5	9	4	1	3
3	5	9	1	8	4	7	6	2
6	4	1	3	7	2	5	8	9
8	7	4	9	1	5	2	3	6
5	9	6	7	2	3	8	4	1
1	2	3	8	4	6	9	5	7

Difficulty level ★★★★ 1/30

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WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally, even backward. Find them and **CIRCLE THEIR LETTERS ONLY. DO NOT CIRCLE THE WORD.** The leftover letters spell the Wonderword.

AMERICAN CRAFTS **Solution: 8 letters**

C	M	T	L	I	U	B	D	N	A	H	O	E	E	R
A	I	N	D	I	A	N	W	R	A	J	R	S	B	E
T	W	V	A	S	E	E	P	E	A	A	S	T	U	H
A	T	A	K	H	S	L	H	V	W	H	N	S	C	T
L	N	E	R	D	A	N	A	E	A	M	O	E	K	A
O	T	O	N	T	R	N	N	N	A	T	I	V	E	E
G	A	A	T	E	S	O	D	E	S	E	L	O	Y	L
U	H	E	T	T	T	W	T	M	L	C	L	D	E	Y
E	R	T	I	S	O	R	H	O	A	L	A	T	S	R
S	A	M	L	V	E	C	R	W	S	D	D	R	A	E
P	E	L	E	S	O	E	O	L	S	L	E	A	F	T
S	O	N	T	V	S	O	W	I	I	T	M	Y	E	T
D	I	L	E	S	D	O	N	N	N	C	L	A	Y	O
F	E	R	A	E	P	I	N	E	C	O	N	E	S	P
C	S	C	N	S	P	U	C	N	S	K	O	O	B	S

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Last Saturday's Answer: Yellow

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ATTORNEYS FOR PLAINTIFF

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

NORTHERN MARIANAS HOUSING CORPORATION, Plaintiff, -v- HILBERT HENRY C. SAN NICOLAS, Defendant.) CIVIL ACTION) No. 11-0322

SUMMONS FOR PUBLICATION

TO THE ABOVE-NAMED DEFENDANTS:

YOU ARE HEREBY SUMMONED and notified to file any answer you wish to make to Complaint, a copy which is served upon you hereby, within twenty-one (21) days after the fourth publication of this Summons, and to deliver or mail a copy of our answer to THE LAW OFFICES OF MICHAEL A. WHITE, LLC, the Plaintiff's attorneys, whose address is Post Office Box 5222, Saipan, MP 96950, as soon as practicable after filing your answer or sending it to the Clerk of Courts for filing.

Your answer should be in writing and filed with the Clerk of this Court at Susupe, Saipan. It may be prepared and signed for you by your counsel and sent to the Clerk of this Court by messenger or mail. It is not necessary for you to appear personally until further notice.

If you fail to answer in accordance with this Summons, judgment by default may be taken against you for the relief demanded in the Complaint.

DATED, this 5th day of January, 2012, by order of the Court:

/s/Clerk of Court

Bonicia S. Fejeran
P.O. Box 503658
Saipan, MP 96950
Telephone No.: (670) 323-2639

PRO SE

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

IN THE MATTER OF THE PETITION FOR THE CHANGE OF NAME OF: JEREMY JR. FEJERAN MANALO and DONNIE VINCE FEJERAN MANALO Minor Children,

by

BONICIA SEMAN FEJERAN Petitioner

FCD CN CIVIL ACTION NO. 12-0015

NOTICE OF HEARING

Notice is here by given that the above-entitled matter is set for a hearing on February 9th, 2012, at 9:30 a.m. in Courtroom 217A, before Associate Judge Perry B. Inos.

Dated this 9th day of January, 2012

Bernadita A. Sablan
Clerk of Court

/s/ Deputy Clerk of Court

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ADS	(PRINT)	COMBO (PRINT AND ONLINE)
• 3-Liner	$15	$27
• 5-Liner	$24	$39
• 3-Liner with picture	$24	$42
• 5-Liner with picture	$36	$57

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Classified Ads

Ads must be submitted before 12 noon 2 days prior to publication date

Saturday Issue:
- All ads placed Friday before 12 noon will come out Saturday issue and anything placed thereafter will be published on Monday issue.

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Classified Ads

Cancellations should be made before 12 noon of the day prior to date of publication.

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Refunds will only be made if cancellation deadlines are met. No refunds will be made once ad is already printed.

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Saipan Tribune will not be responsible for errors after the first day of publication. Errors should be called in before noon of the issue date. *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.

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All advertising in the *Saipan Tribune* are subject to applicable rate sheet, copies of which are available from the Advertising Sales Department (please call 235-8747, 235-2769 or 235-6397). All ads will be subject to approval prior to publication. We reserve the right to edit, refuse, reject or cancel any ad at any time. Also, *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.

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Giants' front four set to go after Brady

EAST RUTHERFORD, N.J. (AP)—Defense for the New York Giants starts with the front four.

Stopping the run and forcing the opposition into passing situations will let loose possibly the best group of pass rushers in the NFL. It was the formula the Giants used in 2008 in pounding Tom Brady and stunning the previously unbeaten New England Patriots in the Super Bowl - and the game plan hasn't changed for next weekend's title game rematch in Indianapolis.

The Giants (12-7) want Brady on edge every time he passes. Throw a ball. Expect to be hit. Even the threat of being hit might be enough to influence a play. And that just might be the difference with a ring at stake.

"Look at `07. That was pretty much the reason why we were in the game, because we kept him off-rhythm," defensive end and captain Justin Tuck said. "Obviously he is the main reason why (they) are successful. The way to kill the snake is to take off his head. The way to kill an offense as potent as that one is making sure you take care of Brady. Our defensive front will put a lot of pressure on itself to make sure that we do our best to get after him."

The Giants finished tied for third in the NFL in the regular season with 48 sacks, including 11 in victories over the Jets and Cowboys in winning the NFC East title. They have added nine more in their three playoff wins.

What makes the pass rush so formidable is that it's not only four guys. The Giants' line is eight deep. All Pro Jason Pierre-Paul led the team with 16 1/2 sacks in his second season, while Osi Umenyiora added nine in only nine games. Tuck and backup defensive end Dave Tollefson had five apiece, Chris Canty added four and fellow tackle Linval Joseph had two. There's also linebacker Mathias Kiwanuka, who had 3 1/2 sacks playing as a lineman in passing situations.

Defensive coordinator Perry Fewell says not only does his line get to the quarterback, they get on each other. When the linemen hold their meeting, it's more than a review of the game or practice—it's trash-talking time.

"We compete amongst each other and if Justin gets a sack, I want two," Pierre-Paul said. "If I want two, then Osi wants three. Basically you can say that we are greedy but in a good way, to help our team out. We try to get there quick enough to help our secondary cover better and try to get to the quarterback as fast as we can."

Kiwanuka said the presence of so many pass rushers pushes everyone.

"We have a number of guys, you look at the roster, Dave Tollefson is a guy who came on and had a strong year and played very well," Kiwanuka said. "From top to bottom, in that room, we have guys who could be starting on other teams. We're just not fighting for sacks. We are fighting for playing time as well. Everybody want to be the guy but at the end of the day, it's about the win and that's what also is important."

Brady knows what to expect. In the Giants' 17-14 Super Bowl win in Arizona, he absorbed five sacks and was hit nine times, although the Giants insist the hit total was a lot higher.

"They can rush the passer. There's no doubt about that," Brady said. "In playing them before, you understand that they can—they stripped sacked us on our own 10-yard line or something like that when we played them last. They get a lot of turnovers. They put a lot of pressure on you with their front four. They have a big, physical group that plays really well together. You watch them play against the 49ers; they played a great game defensively. They gave up two points against Atlanta which was on a defensive score. They're a great football team, they have a great defense. Every time we play them, it's, you talk about their defense, their pass rush."

One thing that separates the Giants' pass rush from other teams is its speed. In passing situations, New York many times lines up Pierre-Paul, Tuck, Umenyiora and Kiwanuka—or four defensive ends. They bring a quickness that Patriots guards Logan Mankins and Brian Waters usually don't see.

And that could put the head of the snake in danger.

"Hey, if that's the analogy that they're taking then that's what it is," New England receiver Deion Branch said. "I think our job is to go out and protect our guy, protect the snake so he doesn't get his head cut off. But, hey, that's Justin. He's a great player. Trust me, we truly respect that guy, respect what he's done for the league, what he's doing for his team, but we can't worry about that part. We have to worry about what we're doing and the snake will do his part."

Brady does have something else to worry about. Not only are the Giants getting to the passer, New York's secondary has settled down after a season of miscommunication. Matt Ryan, Aaron Rodgers and Alex Smith frequently had to go to second and third options in recent weeks because the secondary took away the primary receiver, giving the line more time to get to the quarterback.

And the Giants intend to get to Brady again.

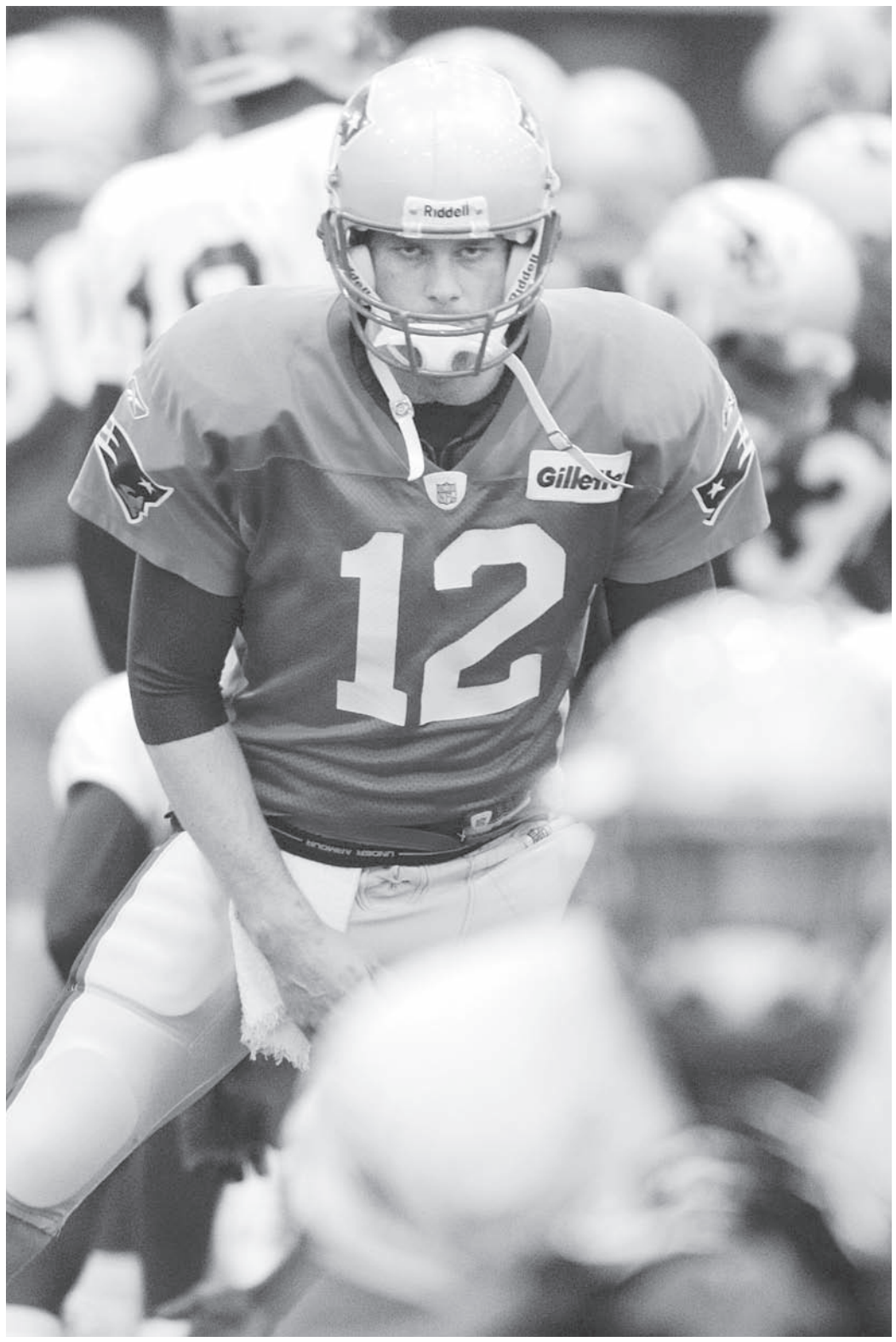
Umenyiora remembers talking to Michael Strahan at breakfast on the morning of Super Bowl XLII.

"Strahan was just talking, being loud, his usual self, whatever, and I'm usually the one who is joking around, but I was dead serious that morning," Umenyiora said. "I was like, `Stray, in order for us to win this game we're going to have to get to the quarterback, we're going to have to really get to him.'

"He was like, `Yeah, yeah, whatever.' I made him put his fork down, and I was like, `I'm dead serious, man, we have to do this.' And he was like, `All right, cool,' and he stopped joking around then and he was all business and we went out there and took care of it."

Umenyiora has that same feeling, even a sense of anger that the Giants are once again the underdogs despite beating the Patriots 24-20 in New England in November.

"Most people picking this game will say they're going to win this game, but we know at the end of the day we're going to have to get to him as often as we can if we're going to win this football game. And that's exactly what we plan on doing," Umenyiora said.



AP

New England Patriots quarterback Tom Brady stretches along with his teammates during NFL football practice in Foxborough, Mass., Friday, Jan. 27, 2012. The Patriots face the New York Giants in Super Bowl XLVI on Feb. 5, in Indianapolis.

Woods shoots 66 to share lead in Abu Dhabi

ABU DHABI, United Arab Emirates (AP)—Tiger Woods put himself in position to win his second straight tournament Saturday, and this one would leave little doubt about which direction his game is going.

He finally won two months ago against an 18-man field in California.

On Saturday, against the strongest field golf has seen in at least three months, Woods shot a 6-under 66 for a share of the lead with Robert Rock going into the final round of the Abu Dhabi Golf Championship.

The topic suddenly shifts from the state of his swing and his health. Woods has a 55-8 record worldwide when he has at least a share of the lead going into the final round, and a win would be the first time since August 2009 that he has won consecutive starts.

More than being atop the leaderboard, it's how Woods got there.

"It's fun when I'm able to control the golf ball like I did," Woods said.

There wasn't a lot of fist-pumping from Woods, who traded drama for consistency, racking up six birdies in a bogey-free round. It was a memorable performance by the American, mostly for his ability to hit fairways, tame the par 5s and sink clutch putts—including a 6-footer for birdie on the final hole.

"It just seemed like I didn't do a lot of things right but I didn't do a lot of things wrong today, it was just very consistent," Woods said. "You know, made a couple putts here and there. ... I stayed away from trouble and tried to keep the ball towards the fat side of some of these pins, and I think I did a pretty good job."

Woods finished at 11-under 205. Rock, at No. 117 in the world, birdied his final two holes to join Woods in the last group along with Peter Hanson, who had a 64 and was two shots behind.

Also two back at 9-under 207 were Rory McIlroy, who played with Woods for the third straight day and had a 68, keeping the No. 3 player very much in the picture.

Francesco Molinari (66) and Paul Lawrie (68) also were tied for third. George Coetzee (65), James Kingston (67), overnight leader Thorbjorn Olesen (71) and Jean-Baptiste Gonnet (69) were another shot back.

The two-month break did little to slow Woods' progress. This was the first time in 20 months—dating to The Players Championship in 2010—that he broke par in the opening three rounds of any tournament. It was his lowest score since a 66 in the second round of the Masters last year, and his first time atop the leaderboard in a full-field event since he won the Australian Masters in November 2009.

Woods was two shots back after the second round, but started climbing up the leaderboard Saturday with an opening birdie, followed by another on No. 7. He stepped up his game on the back nine and grabbed a share of the lead after he just missed an eagle putt on 10 and settled for a birdie. He briefly took the outright lead with a birdie on 14.

The crowd of several hundred cheered every birdie, with some yelling "Tiger's back."

Woods refused to talk about his chances of winning, saying there were too many players within striking distance.

"There's a ton of guys with a chance to win," Woods said. "I can't go out there and shoot even par and expect to win. I've got to go out there and go get it."

Rock, who got his first European Tour win last year in Italy in a playoff with Sergio Garcia, admitted he was starstruck at the prospect of teeing off alongside Woods, calling him "the best guy I've ever seen play golf."

Rock was just one of several players who challenged Woods for the lead after overnight leader Olesen fell back.

Lawrie, the 1999 British Open champion, showed some of the form he displayed when he finished second at the Dubai World Championship in December. He strung together birdies on 10 and 11 to tie Woods for the lead, fell back with bogeys on 14 and 17 and then recovered to birdie the 18th.

Bucks keep Lakers' road woes going with 100-89 win

MILWAUKEE (AP)—Drew Gooden scored 23 points and the undermanned Milwaukee Bucks made sure the Lakers' road struggles continued, beating Los Angeles.

Kobe Bryant scored 27 for the Lakers, who are 1-7 on the road this season.

Ersan Ilyasova and Mike Dunleavy added 15 points each for the Bucks, who managed to beat the Lakers without two of their best players.

Already scrambling to compensate for the long-term absence of injured center Andrew Bogut, the Bucks found themselves without guard/forward Stephen Jackson on Saturday because of an NBA suspension.

Bryant made six free throws to break Jerry West's franchise record for free throws made. Coming into Saturday's game, Bryant needed three makes to tie West's mark of 7,160. Bryant also came closer to becoming the Lakers' career leader in field goals made. He was 10 of 21 from the floor Saturday, leaving him three short of the 13 field goals he needed to tie Kareem Abdul-Jabbar's franchise record of 9,935 field goals made.

Even without Bogut and Jackson, the Bucks were in control most of the way. Ilyasova hit a jumper at the horn to end the third quarter, and the Bucks took an 80-73 lead into the fourth.

The Bucks led 85-76 after an inside score from Ilyasova with just under eight minutes left, but Bryant scored five straight points to cut the lead to four.

But Luc Richard Mbah a Moute hit a jumper, then Gooden scored on a turnaround hook shot and hit a pair of free throws to run the lead back to 91-81.

Andrew Bynum scored inside, but Dunleavy hit a long jumper to give the Bucks a 93-83 lead with just over two minutes left.

After Bryant made a pair of free throws, Dunleavy drilled a 3-pointer to put the game away with 1:24 left.

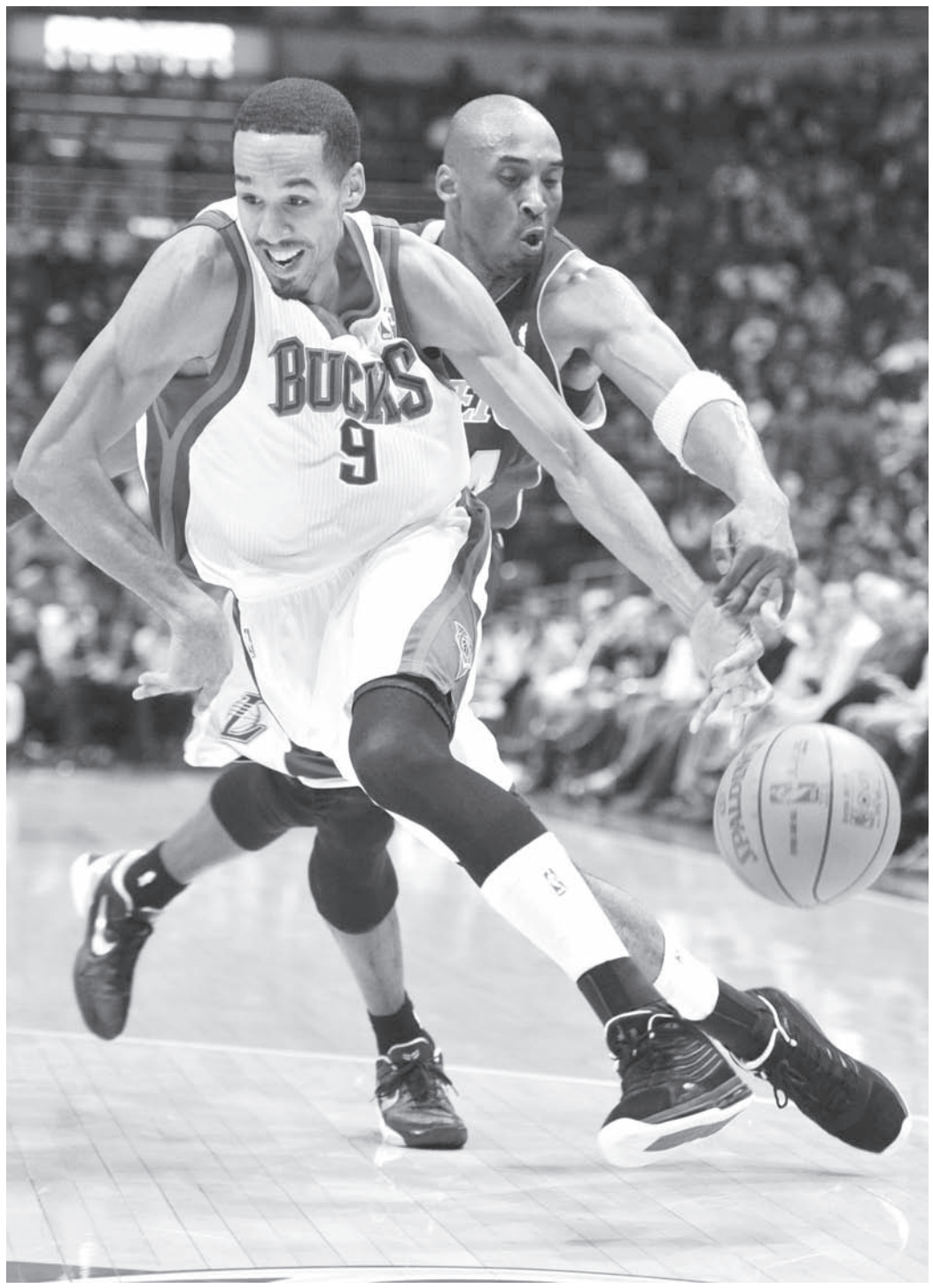
The Bucks managed the beat the Lakers without Jackson, whose suspension was announced a few hours before the game.

The NBA suspended Jackson one game for verbal abuse of a game official and failure to leave the court in a timely manner at the end of the Bucks' 107-100 loss at Chicago on Friday night.

It's another rough moment for Jackson, who was benched by coach Scott Skiles in the Bucks' Jan. 20 game at the New York Knicks.

Bogut, meanwhile, fractured his left ankle in Wednesday's game at Houston and is expected to miss eight to 12 weeks - a crushing blow for Milwaukee.

Without Bogut, the undersized Bucks faced a tough test from the Lakers' pair of 7-footers: Pau Gasol and Andrew Bynum.



AP

Milwaukee Bucks' Shaun Livingston (9) drives to the basket as Los Angeles Lakers' Kobe Bryant tries for the steal during the second half of an NBA basketball game on Saturday, Jan. 28, 2012, in Milwaukee. The Bucks defeated the Lakers, 100-89.

But they held their ground on defense early on, taking a 51-43 lead at halftime. The Bucks forced the Lakers into 10 turnovers in the first half, and limited Gasol to six points on 3 for 10 shooting.

Gasol finished the game with 12 points and 15 rebounds, but was 6 for 18 from the floor.

Lakers rookie guard Andrew Goudelock scored 13 points despite being hospitalized for dehydration overnight. Goudelock was coming off his best performance of the year, having scored a career-high 14 points against the Clippers on Wednesday.

Suns 86, Grizzlies 84

In Phoenix, Jared Dudley made two free throws with 3.3 seconds remaining to lift the Phoenix Suns over the Memphis Grizzlies.

Dudley finished with a season-high 20 points, Steve Nash added 21 and Marcin Gortat finished with 13 points and 12 rebounds for the Suns, who snapped a three-game losing streak.

Rudy Gay and Marc Gasol had 18 points each and Mike Conley added 15 for the Grizzlies, who have dropped three straight after a season-best seven-game winning streak.

The Grizzlies had a chance to win but Conley, coming off a screen by Gasol at the top right of the arc, missed a 3-pointer at the buzzer.

Jazz 96, Kings 93

In Salt Lake City, Gordon Hayward scored a season-high 21 points and C.J. Miles added 20 as the Utah Jazz snapped a two-game losing streak, defeating Sacramento and spoiling Jimmer Fredette's return to the state where "Jimmermania" began.

Fredette had a chance to give the Kings the win with 4.2 seconds left, but launched an air-ball 3-pointer.

Hayward's free throw sealed it for Utah (11-7).

Tyreke Evans led Sacramento (6-14) with 31 points on 12-of-20 shooting.

Fredette, a former Brigham Young star and last year's national player of the year, finished with 14 points and 3 of 5 from beyond the arc. But he was just 5 of 13 overall.

Sixers 95, Pistons 74

In Philadelphia, Andre Iguodala recorded the eighth triple-double of his career with 10 points, 10 assists and 10 rebounds, and the Philadelphia 76ers won their second straight game with a 95-74 victory over the struggling Detroit Pistons on Saturday night.

Iguodala, who turned 28 on Saturday, received a nice ovation from the crowd when he secured his triple-double with a defensive rebound with 7:34 remaining.

Lou Williams scored 17 points, Elton Brand added 14 and Jrue Holiday had 13 for the Sixers, who improved to 14-6 and 10-2 at home.

The Pistons received a boost with the return of forward Tayshaun Prince, who had missed the previous two games tending to a family matter. Prince only scored six points, however. Greg Monroe led the Pistons with 16 points and 10 rebounds.

Wizards 102, Bobcats 99

In Charlotte, JaVale McGee scored 22 points and had 10 rebounds as the Washington Wizards defeated the Charlotte Bobcats for the second time in a week.

The matchup between two teams tied for the fewest wins in the NBA came down to the final shot, but Matt Carroll's 3-point attempt at the buzzer fell short. McGee had a chance to seal the game with less than 6 seconds to go, but missed two foul shots. But that was about all McGee didn't do right, as shot 9 of 14 from the field. Like many others this season, McGee exposed Charlotte's poor interior defense, using an effective hook shot in the lane.

Kemba Walker became the third Bobcats player to register a triple-double, recording 20 points, 10 rebounds and 11 assists. The 6-foot-1 Walker joined Stephen Jackson and Boris Diaw as the only players in franchise history to record such a feat.

Rockets 97, Knicks 84

In Houston, Chase Budinger scored 19 points, Samuel Dalembert grabbed 14 rebounds and the Houston Rockets beat the New York Knicks for their ninth win in 10 games.

Jordan Hill had 14 points and 11 rebounds, Courtney Lee scored 14 points in place of the injured Kevin Martin, and the Rockets shot 49 percent (38 of 77) to improve to 9-2 at home this season.

Houston blew open a close game in the third quarter as the Knicks' offense sputtered again without Carmelo Anthony. New York failed to reach 90 points for the fifth time in seven games.

Amare Stoudemire scored 23 points and Tyson Chandler added 14 for the Knicks. New York went 5 for 26 from 3-point range a night after shooting an NBA season-high 43 times from beyond the arc in a loss to Miami.

Nadal hungry for revenge over Djokovic at Aussie Open

MELBOURNE, Australia (AP)—Serbia's Novak Djokovic can Sunday seal his fourth grand slam in five and stamp his authority on the new tennis season, but blocking his way to the Australian Open title is a revenge-hungry Rafael Nadal.

Djokovic replaced Nadal as world number one after he beat him in last year's Wimbledon final, and he defeated the Spaniard again in the US Open decider as he took the season by storm.

Those two victories were among six consecutive wins over Nadal—all in finals—during one of the greatest campaigns in tennis history which included the Australian Open, Wimbledon and US Open titles.

The defending champion, who reached the final in Melbourne after five gruelling sets against Britain's Andy Murray late on Friday, is expecting another tough, physical battle against second-seeded Nadal.

"I think that's going to be crucial, you know, for me to recover and to be able to perform my best, because Rafa is fit. He's been playing well. He had an extra day. He definitely wants to win this title," Djokovic said.

The 24-year-old, chasing his third Australian Open title after wins in 2008 and 2011, and his fifth grand slam overall, admits he may have an advantage over the 10-time major winner after his stunning record against him last year.

"I maybe have a mental edge because I've won six finals the five or six times we played in 2011 and I've had lots of success against him," he said.

"On the other hand, it's a new year. It's a new challenge. It's a different situation. As I said, he has maybe a day advantage over me for recovery and for getting ready for the finals."

Djokovic described Nadal's comeback from a set down to beat Roger Federer in his semi-final as an "incredible effort". The Spaniard wore down the Swiss after losing the first set to once again prove his grand slam nemesis.

"That's why he's a champion. That's why he's one of the best players to ever play this game. He's never giving up. He has a fighting spirit. He has very few weaknesses," said the top seed.

Nadal, 25, suffered severe pains in his troublesome right knee on the eve of the tournament but after frantic treatment he recovered and he has impressed in Melbourne, particularly in his win over Federer on Thursday.

The Spaniard, who won the Australian Open title in 2009, said he was happy to be playing in his fourth grand slam final in a row but admitted Djokovic was the favourite.

"The opponent at the end is the best player of the world today, so that's why I played the last few finals against him," Nadal said.

"So it will always be a really tough match for me. He is the favourite after being number one in the world and after playing fantastic and beating me the last six times. So I'm just happy to be there.

"For me, the tournament is really, really good. Right now I'm going to try to play my best tennis and fight for every ball knowing that it's going to be a tough one."

Djokovic can become only the fifth man to win three straight grand slam titles in the open era, while Nadal can match Bjorn Borg and Rod Laver with his 11th major win, and move to joint fourth on the all-time list

Rays sweep Ayuyus in MISO boys basketball

By WALTER CEPEDA SUTHERLAND
walter_sutherland@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Saipan Southern High School swept Kagman High School in last Friday's games in the 2011-2012 Marianas Interscholastic Sports Organization Boys Basketball League at the Marianas High School Gymnasium.

The Rays' varsity squad outlasted KHS, 50-35, with a late fourth quarter push, while the junior Rays bested Kagman Ayuyus in the first game, 44-29. Southern's varsity improved to a 4-1 record, while Kagman absorbed its first defeat after starting the season with a pair of victories. Southern's juniors moved up to a 2-1 slate and are now tied with Grace Christian Academy atop the standings. Friday marked the junior Ayuyus' season debut.

In the varsity match, KHS seized a 12-5 lead in the opening 10 minutes as Jason Lampkins and Joshua Jones nailed a couple of baskets. Then KHS was held to eight points in the second quarter, bringing its lead down to three at halftime, 20-17.

Southern drained a couple of three-pointers in the third period and turned the table on KHS, 31-28, heading into crunch time. Jack Aranda led the charge with eight markers.

Kagman kept pace with its rival all the way up until the last five minutes when Southern kicked it in another gear and exploded with its transition defense. Rebounds were hard to come by for KHS as the game progressed and the Ayuyus appeared to have run out of gas late in the game.

An And-1 play by Bryl Alegre seemed to be the straw that broke the Ayuyus back, as KHS was within two possessions up until that point and never recovered. Christian Mizer came alive for the Rays in the last quarter, firing nine markers in the clutch to seal the deal. He led all scorers with 14, while Lampkins scrambled for 10 in the hard fought loss.

In the junior matchup, Southern jumped to an early 12-3 lead off a pair of six-point strings by Edilberto Javier and Emerson Feria.

KHS tightened up its defense and crawled its way back to within three points at midpoint, 11-8, however Southern regrouped at the break and trudged ahead, 32-19, after three quarters. Feria led the charge with six points in the third period. Teams traded baskets in the fourth quarter, allowing Southern to keep the lead and the win.

Feria and Javier combined for 33 points for the Rays, while Jesse and Jonathan Santos teamed up for 21 on the short end for Kagman.

Junior Varsity Game

SSHS 44 – Feria 19, Javier 14, Camacho 5, Palacios 2, Ferrer 2, Acopiado 2.

KHS 29 – Je. Santos 11, Jo. Santos 10, Evangelista 4, Mafnas 2.

Scoring by quarters: 12-3, 18-11, 32-19, 44-29.

Varsity Game

SSHS 50 – Mizer 14, Aranda 10, Tudela 6, De Guzman 5, Mariano 5, Alegre 4, Sablan 2, Salem 2, Villanueva 2.

KHS 35 – Lampkins 10, Jones 9, Taitano 8, Mettao 6, Eugenio 2.

Scoring by quarters: 5-12, 17-20, 31-28, 50-35.

AZARENKA

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have been dreaming and working so hard to win the Grand Slam, and being No. 1 is pretty good bonus. Just the perfect ending and the perfect position to be in."

Azarenka had won 11 straight matches, including a run to the Sydney International title, and reached her first Grand Slam final. Her previous best performance at a major was a semifinal loss to Petra Kvitova at Wimbledon last year. Sharapova had all the experience, being in her sixth major final and having won three - dating to her 2004 Wimbledon title.

But it didn't unnerve the 22-year-old Azarenka, the first woman from Belarus to win a singles major. She's also the seventh different woman to win a Grand Slam since Francesca Schiavone won the 2010 French Open, and the fifth different winner in as many majors.

Azarenka became only the third woman to earn the No. 1 spot after winning her first major title. She moved from No. 3 to No. 1 in the rankings, helped by Caroline Wozniacki's loss in the quarterfinals.

The third-seeded Azarenka set up championship point with a stunning forehand, her 14th clean winner, and sealed it when Sharapova netted a backhand.

She dropped to her knees at the baseline with her hands over her face. She got up, held her hands up and jogged over to her coach, Sam Sumyk, in the stands to celebrate.

"The best feeling, for sure," Azarenka said. "I don't know about the game. I don't know what I was doing out there. It's just pure joy what happened. I can't believe it's over."

And she paid special credit to her grandmother, "the person who inspires me the most in my life."

Azarenka has been a distinctive presence at Melbourne Park as much for her shrieks and hoots with each shot and seemingly boundless energy as for her white shorts, blue singlet and lime green head and wrist bands.

Against Sharapova, she maintained the frenetic movement that has been the hallmark of her performance in Australia, her 25th consecutive major. She won the Sydney International title last weekend and is on a 12-match winning streak - the first player since 2004 to win a WTA tour event the week before winning a major.

"She did everything better than I did today. I had a good first couple of games, and that was about it," Sharapova said. "Then she was the one that was taking the first ball and hitting it deep and aggressive. I was always the one running around like a rabbit, you know, trying to play catch-up all the time."

Sharapova also won only three games in a 2007 final loss to Serena Williams, who also conceded only three games in the 2009 final against Dinara Safina.

When Sharapova won the first two games, there was no indication of how lopsided the match would be. Azarenka took control after holding for the first time, breaking Sharapova at love and then holding again on a three-game roll.

Sharapova held, finishing off with an ace, to level the score at 3-3 in the first set but then didn't win another game.

Azarenka started dictating the points, coming to the net at times, hitting winners from the baseline and forcing the 24-year-old Russian to the extremes on both sides of the court. Sharapova seemed barely able to move by comparison, and had 30 unforced errors in the match.

The second set was completely lopsided and lasted only 36 minutes, with Sharapova winning only 12 points.

"As in any sport, you have your good days, you have your tough days and you have days where things just don't work out," said Sharapova, who has now been on the losing end of two of the most lopsided scorelines in a final at Melbourne Park.

SAN ANTONIO

From Page 28

The Danny Bicera-coached San Antonio led from start to finish and withstood San Roque's late rally to book a Final Four ticket. San Antonio led by as much as 21, 70-49, off Pedro Castro's five straight points, before Noel David anchored a 12-2 rally to threaten a come back. David scored seven points in that run, cutting San Antonio's lead to 11, 72-61, with about three minutes left in the game.

However, that was the closest San Roque could get, as San Antonio converted six straight points off three fastbreak plays to seal the win.

Jack Aranda top-scored for San Roque with 17, while Jarmark De Guzman and Castro chipped in 16 and 10, respectively.

Aranda nailed San Antonio's first five points and added two more free throws at the end of the first period to put his team on top, 17-10. San Antonio went on to slowly pull away in the next three quarters, capitalizing on its speed and athletic advantages. San Antonio has players suiting up for various youth leagues on Saipan, while San Roque is composed of a mixed of recreational and B league cagers.

San Roque tried to keep up with San Antonio's fast-paced game in the second half, but the gamble backfired, as the former committed more turnovers than fastbreak baskets.

Chalan Kanoa 85, Chalan Kiya 75

In the other playoff game, Chalan Kanoa/Fong's Bakery downed Chalan Kiya/Loving Hands to notch the first semis slot.

The duo of Ezra Caro and Lawrence Rollon did most of the damage for Chalan Kanoa, which will be facing As Lito/Chow Queen in the semifinals this Sunday. Caro had a game-high 26 points, while Rollon added 23.

J.R. Mina also helped Chalan Kanoa's cause, drilling seven of his 11 markers in the final canto.

Caro and Rollon combined for 13 points for Chalan Kanoa in the first period for a 21-18 edge. The game remained close in the next two quarters, but Chalan Kiya never came out of top at the end of each quarter, as it failed to neutralize Caro and Rollon.

First Game

Chalan Kanoa/Fong's Bakery 85 – Caro 26, Rollon 23, Mina 11, Tobias 8, Lerio 7, Santos 4, Bernardo 2. Agbanlog 2.

Chalan Kiya/Loving Hands 75 – Ja. Bahillo 17, Kintz 12, Tabora 8, Je. Bahillo 8, Geli 4, Tuwon 4, Buhay 4, Pacson 2, Illahi 2.

Scoring by quarters: 21-18, 38-37, 62-56, 85-75.

Third Game

San Antonio/Gene's Barber 82 – Aranda 17, De Guzman 16, Castro 10, Ne. Salem 9, Palacios 8, Alegre 7, Ni. Salem 6, Mariano 2.

San Roque/Morales 66 –David 18, Miranda 15, Hernandez 11, Danipog 7, Capalad 6, Aguilar 3, Diyco 2, Cabaddu 2.

Scoring by quarters: 17-10, 36-28, 55-42, 82-66.

CNMI

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of the game will be released tomorrow. Then the team gets another crack at New Zealand today at 4pm. Only four teams are entered in the competition.

Australia 10, CNMI 0

Australia's six hits received some help from the five errors of the CNMI, resulting to the former's run-rule victory on Saturday.

The CNMI came empty to start its second match and Australia jumped on top, 2-0, off two hits and an error in the first inning. Ben Leslie bashed an RBI single.

Both teams stranded a runner in the second and Australia added another run off another hit in the bottom of the third to push ahead, 3-0.

CNMI's struggles continued at the plate in the fourth inning and its frustration may have carried over on the field. CNMI committed three errors in the bottom frame that allowed Australia to trot ahead, 7-0, off just one hit.

The CNMI's Francisco Camacho came to the mound in relief for starter Brett Halstead Jr. two batters into the fifth inning, but Australia still managed to put a couple runs with a sacrifice RBI and a lot of patience at the plate. Australia went on to clinch the early decision in the sixth inning off two hits and an error. Zachary Shepherd reached on a liner to left field and Aaron Sayers followed suit with a shot to center.

In the loss, the CNMI was held to just one hit, a baseknock to left field by Leroy Regis in the second inning.

New Zealand 14, CNMI 3

New Zealand, which is led by Pita Rona, a 6'5" and 215-lb player who just signed with MLB's Baltimore Orioles as a first basemen, broke out to an early 4-0 lead in the first inning. It loaded the bases to start the game and capitalized on a three-RBI smash by Dewald De Klerk with zero outs. The CNMI managed a runner, but could not answer in the bottom frame.

New Zealand then added a run in the second inning off a sacrifice fly by Khalid Gilbert and the count shifted to 7-1 after three innings.

In the top of the third, New Zealand gashed CNMI with runners at second and third base off a double to right field by Rona. Rona and Gilbert later scored off another sacrifice fly assisted by an error.

CNMI finally hit the board with a run in the bottom half, however New Zealand did a good job putting out the fire, as the Commonwealth managed runners on first and second with zero outs only to move home just one runner with the bases loaded.

Then it went from bad to worse when CNMI took the field. The Commonwealth players gave up four walks, a hit, and errors, allowing New Zealand to pull away further, 11-1. The tally then shifted to 14-1, in the top of the fourth with more hitting sprinkled with some shakier defense from the CNMI.

The CNMI regrouped in the fifth inning and pulled out a double play to keep New Zealand at bay, but came up a run short of avoiding the early call off. The CNMI started the bottom of the sixth with back-to-back doubles by Ricardo Dela Cruz and Lancaster Secharmedal, who was later credited with an RBI. Then Cedric Ada tried to keep it rolling with an RBI single, but New Zealand buckled down and found a way to close the door an inning early.

Anthony Leon Guerrero led the CNMI's losing cause, going 2-for-3 at bat with a run. Jake Flores hit 1-for-2 with two RBIs, while Secharmedal was 1-for-1 with a run. Carl Camacho managed five strikeouts.

SUBLEMENTE

From Page 28

course started and ended at San Vicente Church with bikers passing through the backside of the airport, Hawaiian Rock Quarry, Naftan trail, Obyan Beach road, Naftan road (right turn), airport runway road, Naftan road, Flame Tree and airport roads, Chalan Tun Herman Pan, and Isa Drive, before returning to the church.

The weekend fundraiser also had races in seven other divisions.

In the MTB championship course' 40-and-above division, Noel Altamirano clocked in at 47:29, just 23 seconds ahead of runner-up Ricky Melchor (47:52). John Arceo rounded out the Top 3 with a time of 50:39.

In the 40-and-under category, Ricardo Antonio submitted 52:15 to prevail over Bhoei Hernandez (1:04:38). Erico Castro still made it to the Top 3 despite a flat tire, as he clocked in at 1:10:47.

In the women's division, Susan Marchitti completed the MTB championship course in 1:00:19 to win the top prize, while Joan Salazar joined the MTB sports course and finished the race in 35:55.

The men's MTB sports course had Ronald Lanuza as the top finisher, as he checked in at 27:42. Lanuza and company pedaled through Dandan road, back side of the airport and then straight to airport runway road, Naftan road, Flame Tree and airport roads, Chalan Tun Herman Pan, and Isa Drive before returning to San Vicente. Joining him in the Top 3 were Bernard Laborce (27:43) and Ricky Suba (28:07).

Rounding out the top finishers in last Saturday's fundraiser were men's road champion Nap Dizon and women's division co-winners Esther Ada, Juanita Fajardo, Rima Yamagishi, and Sheryl Camacho. The female quartet crossed the finish line together at the 57:17 mark, while Dizon posted 35:50, just seven seconds earlier than runner-up Aldrin Sta. Ana. Rene Calage timed in at 37:25 to place third.

Bikers entered in the road race category went to the airport road, Coral Ocean Point and Pacific Islands Club. From PIC, they turned right Mobil back up to the airport road, Isa Drive, and then to San Vicente Church.

More than 80 bikers joined the Mt. Tapochau Bike Club-organized vent.

WEEKEND SPORTS

Tsunami Saipan swimmers' record times top list

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
roselyn_monroyo@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Tsunami Saipan's swimmers' five record times set during the All Island Invitational 1 led the list of top stories last week.

Making record-breaking swims at the Kan Pacific Swimming Pool were Ryuto Yanai (U8 100m butterfly/1:22.10); Lukas Kang (boys 9 to 10 100m backstroke/1:21.96), Miku Tammy (9 to 10 800m freestyle swim/ 11:49.95); Kaito Yanai (boys 11 to 12 200m breaststroke 2:51.79); and Kensuke Kimura (15 to 16 800m freestyle/9:12.98).

Other notable events last week were the Northern Mariana Islands Volleyball Association's 5th Annual Coed Reverse Grass Volleyball Tournament, Seventh Day Adventist School's MTB/Road bike fundraiser, pre-Tagaman swim race, and the clinic of Hanwha Eagles Professional Baseball Club at the Koblerville Elementary School.

JR Gechig and Charnessa Lizama ruled the NMIVA grass tournament after beating Tyce Mister and Toni Yamada in the finals, 21-18, while Butch Sublemente and Mieko Carey led the winners in the SDA fundraiser at Paupau Beach.

Over in San Antonio, the pre-Tagaman course swim drew 15 swimmers with Jeff El-Hajj and Florence Antonio prevailing in the long and short races, respectively.

In Koblerville, five members of the Hanwha Eagles conducted a youth baseball clinic to a group of about 40 fifth and sixth graders from the Umangs.

Meanwhile, other on-going competitions on Saipan continued last week.

The Marianas Interscholastic Sports Organization had its girls soccer, boys basketball, and girls volleyball games; the MDX league played the last matches in the regular season; and the Rocball league had its second round tiffs.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO
Tsunami Saipan's Kensuke Kimura cools off after his record swim in the 800m freestyle race during the All Island Invitational 1 last week at the Kan Pacific Swimming Pool in Marpi.

Piamonte is 2011 Fil-Taga Golfer of the Year

By WALTER CEPEDA SUTHERLAN
walter_sutherland@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Raffy Piamonte was named 2011 Fil-Taga Golfer of the Year after ruling the season-ending competition at the Marianas Country Club.

Piamonte shot a net 74 in the second round of the final event at the Marpi course on Jan. 22 for a two-round total of 145. He carded a net 71 in the opening round played on Jan. 15 at the Kingfisher Golf Links after tallying a 53 and 50 on the front and back nines. In the second round, Piamonte logged a 53 in the first nine holes and a 49 in the last.

For his feat, Piamonte took home a trophy, $300 cash prize, and free round of golf courtesy of MCC Piamonte edged co-runners up Ruben Avendano and Rene Batallones by a stroke, while William Retardo rounded out the Top 4 with a combined net score of 149.

Eighteen of the 21 registered golfers completed both rounds.

Sunday's event also coupled as the club's January Ace of the Month tournament.

James Mitchell and Richard Atalig topped a field of 28 golfers to take the January Ace titles. Since over 20 participants turned out for the 2012 season-opening event, by rule the tournament was divided into two groups.

B field's Mitchell posted a 41 on the front nine and finished the round with a 51 on the back for a gross score of 93 that adjusted into a net count of 70.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Fil-Taga members pose for a group photo before the opening round of the 2011 Golfer of the Year tournament at the Kingfisher Golf Links on Jan. 15.

Piamonte

Atalig grossed a 42 on the first nine holes and pulled into the clubhouse with another 42 for a raw card of 84, which was calculated into a net 71. The pair won modest cash prizes and entrees to the 2012 finale tournament.

Batallones settled for another runner-up finish as he came just one shot short of taking the January Ace honors. He grossed an 82 for a net score of 73, while Retardo turned in a gross 81 for a net 74 that tied Piamonte, Randy Tudela, and Jess Yumul for fourth place. Tudela and Yumul grossed a 101 and 104, respectively.

Filtaga's next event is slated for Feb. 19 at MCC.

Santa Remedios fundraiser golf tourney March 24

The Sister Remedios Parish Pastoral Council is holding a fundraising golf tournament on March 24.

Proceeds of the event will be used for renovations and repairs to the church in Tanapag.

Venue for the competition has yet to be determined, however the parish is requesting local golf organizations to reserve the weekend for the fundraiser. Entrance fee is $100 per person and $90 for early birds that register at least a week in advance.

Trophies and cash prizes will be awarded to the Top 3 placers and various consolation prizes will also be up for grabs.

The parish plans to improve the church's surrounding area to create a more beautiful ambience; renovate the parking lot to increase the spaces available, the front entrance to enable easy access during funeral services, and front walkway to integrate a portico structure to the church; and construct a chapel in the Tanapag cemetery to provide shelter during outdoor services.

Sister Remedios in Tanapag did not put on a fundraising tournament last year, but have done so in the past. This event marks its sixth or seventh fundraiser in recent years.

For more information or to register, contact tournament coordinator Pete Igitol at 322-7554, PPC president Bill Lieto at 287-9459 or PPC parish administrator Art Stoia at 322-7254. ***(Walter Cepeda Sutherland)***

SSC lines up three open water races, clinic

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
roselyn_monroyo@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Saipan Swim Club will be hosting three ocean swim races and another clinic this season.

First up on the list is the 7th Annual Meek and Mighty Ocean Swim, which will be held on Feb. 25 in the waters off the Pacific Islands Club in San Antonio.

Last year's Meek and Mighty race was held in April, but this season it was moved two months earlier to help prepare athletes competing in Tagaman (March 31).

"Meek & Mighty is an excellent opportunity for those preparing for Tagaman since we will be swimming the Tagaman course. Meek & Mighty is open to both children and adults," SSC's Suzy Kindel said in an email to *Saipan Tribune.*

The Meek race will feature a one-kilometer course, while the Mighty event will have the longest distance at 5K. There is also a Tweeny race, which will cover a distance of 3K.

Andrew Kimball ruled last year's Mighty race, timing in at 1:17:11 and beating Victoria Chentsova (1:19:55), sister Grace (1:22:56), Carol Lynn Pierce (1:30:31), and Gary Guzman. In the 3K event, Kento Akimaru (46:13) edged Mieko Carey (46:43), while Kindel prevailed in the shortest race with a time of 18:50.

Two months after the Meek and Mighty event, the club will be holding the 34th Annual Ocean Swim on April 15. This event will allow participants to swim around the Wold War II tanks in the waters off World Resort.

Then on May 5, SSC, pending approval from the Department of Public Safety and the U.S. Coast Guard, has scheduled the Escape from Managaha.

Besides the ocean swims and its regular meets at the Kan Pacific Swimming Pool in Marpi, SSC is also planning to host another clinic, which will be conducted by Carey, the club's assistant coach.

Carey had a clinic last Saturday at the Marpi pool and held personalized instruction with Heather Kennedy, Mamiko Oshima-Berger, Mike Pai, Nicole Huer, Juanita Fajardo, and Kindel.

"Everyone was really pleased with the clinic. It was a perfect number for Mieko to give personalized instruction. Based on Mieko's travel and competition schedule, SSC plans to hold another clinic later this year," Kindel said.

Carey said she is happy to be back as SSC assistant coach as she loves helping out swimmers, especially the young ones, hone their kills.

"I came back to SSC to teach kids to swim and have fun doing sports. Saipan has a lot of beautiful beaches, so if kids can swim or dive they can see the different parts of the island. Also these kids know I do triathlon and some of them are interested to do triathlon. I want to share to them my experience and I hope I can help them become active in different sports," Carey said.

Meanwhile, entrance fee to the Meek and Mighty event is only $10 and pre-registration is encouraged. Entry forms are available at the Marpi pool or can be obtained electronically by emailing Rob Torres at rttlaw@pticom.com. Registration at the venue starts at 7am, while the race begins at 8am.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO
SSC assistant coach Mieko Carey assists a swimmer during a clinic last week at the Kan Pacific Swimming Pool in Marpi.

Giants' front four set to go after Brady
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Azarenka upsets Sharapova in Aussie Open

Victoria Azarenka of Belarus holds the trophy aloft during the awarding ceremony after defeating Maria Sharapova of Russia in their women's singles final at the Australian Open tennis championship, in Melbourne Australia, Saturday, Jan. 28, 2012. AP

By JOHN PYE
AP SPORTS WRITER

MELBOURNE, Australia (AP)—Victoria Azarenka started celebrating, then suddenly did a double-take to ask her coach, "What happened?"

The answer: She had just produced one of the most lopsided Australian Open final victories to capture a Grand Slam title and the No. 1 ranking for the first time.

Azarenka routed three-time Grand Slam winner Maria Sharapova 6-3, 6-0 in 1 hour, 22 minutes on Saturday night, winning 12 of the last 13 games after dropping her first service game and falling behind 2-0.

"It's a dream come true," she said. "I

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San Antonio enters MDX semis

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
roselyn_monroyo@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

San Antonio/Gene's Barber barged into the semifinals of the 2011 MDX Amateur Radio Club Inter-Village Friendship League after routing San Roque/Morales, 82-66, yesterday at the Civic Center Basketball Court in Susupe.

San Antonio's semis foe will be the winner of the Susupe/MDX-San Vicente Saints tiff, which was the last quarterfinal match played in the weekend, but results were unavailable at press time.

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San Antonio's Nikko Salem goes up for a layup against San Roque's Gilbert Miranda during their playoff game in the MDX caging yesterday at the Civic Center Basketball Court in Susupe. ROSELYN B. MONROYO

CNMI sluggers drop first two games

By WALTER CEPEDA SUTHERLAND
walter_sutherland@saipantirbune.com
REPORTER

The CNMI Junior National Team is off to a rocky start in the 2012 18U AAA Oceania Championship

▶ The CNMI's Frankie Camacho delivers a pitch against Australia during a game in the 2012 18U AAA Oceania Championship IBAF Baseball Tournament last Saturday at the Paseo Stadium in Agana, Guam. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

IBAF Baseball Tournament at the Paseo Stadium in Agana, Guam.

The Commonwealth bets started the first leg of the double round-robin competition with a pair of losses over the weekend. The CNMI fell to the New Zealand Junior Diamondbacks, 14-3, in last Friday's opener and then bowed to Austrailia, 10-0, last Saturday. Both games were called off after just six innings.

The CNMI was set to take on Guam at 7pm last night; details

See CNMI on Page 26

Sublemente tops San Vicente race

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
roselyn_monroyo@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Butch Sublemente won another race, bringing his total to four this month alone.

The veteran triathlete reigned supreme in the open division of the MTB championship course of last Saturday's 1st Annual San Vicente Church Bike Race. Sublemente, who placed first in the Enticer 1, pre-XTERRA Trail Run, and Seventh Day Adventist MTB race, timed in at 43:38 in last weekend's event to beat Lewie Tenorio (44:22) and Bob Ferrer (45:16).

The MTB championship

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ROSELYN B. MONROYO
The Top 3 placers in last Saturday's San Vicente Church fundraiser, from left, Butch Sublemente, Lewie Tenorio, and Bob Ferrer pose for a group photo during the awards ceremony.